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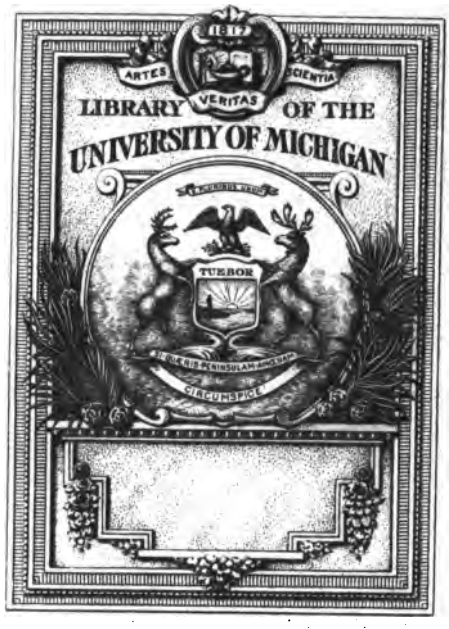

THE GIFT OF
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APOCALYPTICAL KEY.

AN

EXTRAORDINARY DISCOURSE

ON THE

RISE AND FALL OF PAPACY;

OR, THE

POURING OUT OF THE VIALS,

IN THE

REVELATION OF ST. JOHN, CHAP. XVI.

CONTAINING

PREDICTIONS RESPECTING THE REVOLUTIONS OF FRANCE,

THE FATE OF ITS MONARCH;

THE

DECLINE OF PAPAL POWER:

TOGETHER

WITH THE FATE OF THE SURROUNDING NATIONS; THE DESTRUCTION OF MOHAMMEDANISM; THE CALLING IN OF THE JEWS; THE RESTORATION AND CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS, &c., &c.

BY ROBERT FLEMING, V.D.M.

PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL, PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1701.

A NEW EDITION.

TO WHICH IS NOW ADDED

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS, CHIEFLY RESPECTING

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, THE FALL OF POPERY, &c., &c.

BY ARCHBISHOP USHER, DR. OWEN, JURIEU, GOODWIN, WILLISON, DR. GILL, NEWTON, SIMPSON, BICHENO, &c., &c.,

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Philadelphia:

JAMES M. CAMPBELL & CO., 98 CHESTNUT STREET.

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1843.

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AN

EPISTOLARY DISCOURSE

ON THE

RISE AND FALL OF PAPACY.

TO ALL MY TRUE AND GOOD FRIENDS EVERY WHERE; BUT MORE PARTICULARLY TO THE WORTHY GENTLEMEN AND OTHERS THAT COMPOSE THE CHURCH TO WHICH I AM NOW RELATED AS MINISTER.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

In compliance with the frequent and repeated desires of a great many of you, I suffer the following discourse to break loose from their fellows, to take their fortune, as we use to say, in the wide world. And, seeing the candour of so many of my friends has made them think they might not be unuseful; I must, therefore, expect that they will, from the same principle, defend this publication of them, against the censures they may be supposed to fall under, both from open enemies and pretended friends. For though it be a common, and as it were threadbare argument, to plead importunity in this case; yet it is sufficiently known to several of you, that if it had not been for this, the world had not been troubled with any thing further of this kind from me. For as I am sure no affectation to be more known or taken notice of, has influenced me to present these discourses to public view; so I do suppose it is not unknown to some of you, that retirement from this noisy and vain world has ever been the sum of my ambition, excepting when public work and service has obliged me to shake off the beloved fetters of so dear a confinement.

I shall not, therefore, say more as to the following essays, than to tell you (what many of you know already) that as the *first* of the discourses that follow this *prefatory one*, gave rise to the publishing of the *second*, so the *second* gave occasion to the printing of the *third*. And therefore, seeing the late opportunity of preaching, when we entered into our new meeting place, in London, September 29, 1700, did induce some of you to desire the publication also of that sermon I preached when I entered upon the pastoral and ministerial work among you, June 19, 1698; the same occasion has given birth to the last additional discourse, which some remember I made, when I was solemnly set apart to the ministerial office, February 9, 1687–8, which I have the rather consented to print now, because it doth not only suit with the second discourse, but because I remember several false, or at least imperfect copies were taken of it, when I did at first deliver it.

And seeing the last discourse (which yet was first as to time,) doth now appear in the view of the world, I find myself in some sort obliged to interest all my friends in this prefatory address: wherein I do particularly include those of the English church of Leyden, and Scots church in Rotterdam, to whom I stood related successively as minister or pastor: whom I do the rather mention here, that I may let them know, how much they are still upon my thoughts, though we are separated as to place.

But seeing my work is now more particularly appropriated to *you*, whom I am more immediately concerned with and related unto at present, I do, therefore, in a more special manner, address myself to *you* at this time. And I hope ye will bear with me, if, from my sincere respect for your welfare, I detain you awhile here before ye enter upon the perusal either of my apocalyptical thoughts following, or the other discourses, which I do present you with, at your own desire. For in case either of death, or being rendered incapable to serve you, I am willing to give a vent to my thoughts and affection at this time; that whatever comes of me, the following discourses, together with this, may stand as a lasting witness of my real concern for your souls' welfare.

In the first place, therefore, I do declare, that, though I am not willing to state my sufferings upon little matters, or modes of worship and expression; yet I can sincerely say, that should the divine Providence call me to lay down my life for the truths themselves which I have preached among you, I hope I should be so far from quarrelling with the procedure of God this way, that I should rejoice in such a martyrdom. And I hope I have not contradicted in my life what I have preached in the pulpit, whatever my infirmities have been. So I presume it will n-

looked upon as pride or vanity, if I say with the great Apostle, (though as to the last clause I dare not pretend to have been any pattern to you,) "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are venerable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." (Phil. iv. 8, 9.)

For in the next place, I thank God, that he that knows the secrets of all hearts, doth testify together with my conscience, that a sincere concern to be useful to our common Christianity, was the thing that did at first influence me to enter upon this great work of the ministry, and has ever since engaged me, though under more discouragements than most men, to continue and labour in it. So that it is matter of sweet reflection to me, that I never gave any occasion to brand our holy profession with the odious name of priestcraft; whatever any others may have done. For, as I have no other ambition, than to engage and draw men over to the great and catholic interests of Christianity itself, in order to their becoming the followers and servants of our glorious God and blessed Saviour; so I am sure I can confidently say, without any vanity or affectation, (for which I dare appeal not only to you, but all others that have known me ever since I began to preach) that there is not one in the world that ever had just occasion so much as to think, that I did at any time attempt to bring any person over to my way, as a party. And, as thus I have been far from seeking either honour, interest, or popularity; so there are not a few that can bear me witness, that I have incurred the censures of some men of very different denominations, because I could never be induced to think that religion did properly stand in the rituals of any of the contending parties.

The differences, therefore, but especially the animosities, that are among the Protestant Christians, have ever been grievous and afflictive to me. And to heal these, I could cheerfully be offered up a sacrifice, if I can be supposed to be conscious of the sentiments and movements of my own soul. For though we of this congregation differ from all others that dissent from the Episcopal communion, in this, that we are, in a peculiar sense, upon a national foundation, viz. in as far as we not only own the same church government, but keep up the same way that the Church of Scotland useth, in her public administration; to which most of us belong as natives, and all of us as proselytes: yet I must publicly own that, abstracting from this, I am a dissenter from that party that engross and monopolise the name of the Church of England. For I have ever looked upon other controversies as more edifying and momentous, than those unhappy ones, that have kept that great body and ours divided; yet I have so far considered them, as hitherto to find no reason to quit that way I was educated in; notwithstanding the specious reasons made use of to prejudice people against us as *schismatics*, rather than to convince us that we are so.

Therefore, in the third place, I cannot but own (without any design to reflect upon them that differ from me in such matters) that I look upon that way as nearest to the Christian institution, that has the fewest, and most natural, and unaffected, and consequently most spiritual rites and ceremonies, in the performance of gospel ordinances. For, as a learned conformist* says, in a book in which he did afterwards, indeed, seem to differ from, but never attempted to retract or refute, and perhaps, was never able to do: "Certainly the primitive church, that did not charge men with such a load of articles, as now in these latter ages men are charged with, would much less have burdened men with imposing doubtful practices upon them as the ground of church communion. There is nothing then that the primitive church deserves more imitation in by us, than that admirable temper, moderation, and condescension, which was used in it towards all the members of it. It was never thought worth the while to make any standing laws for rites and customs, that had no other original but tradition; much less to suspend men from her communion for not observing them." And if this was the practice of the primitive church, it was eminently so in the apostolical age; to whom, as acted by the Holy Ghost, it seemed good to require nothing by way of imposition, but a very few necessary things, viz. that Christians should abstain from idols, blood, things strangled, and fornication. (Acts xv. 28, 29.) But alas! since that time it hath seemed good to men (but I am sure not to the Holy Spirit,) to impose a great many unnecessary things on the consciences of others; without any such allowance as was given them, that every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind, in what he did. (Rom. xiv. 5.) From what regard have some men to this apostolical rule, when their impositions are laid as stumblingblocks in their brethren's way, (Rom. xiv. 13, &c.,) without any regard to the wounding of their weak consciences, upon the supposition they are so? (1 Cor. viii. 12.) Is this to imitate the Apostle's tenderness, who resolved rather never to eat flesh, than to offend any weak brother. (1 Cor. viii. 13.) Or, do men this way seek the thing of Jesus Christ, or their own private ends and emoluments. (Phil. ii. 21.)

Therefore, let men dispute about forms and ceremonies, and their decency or necessity, as long as they please; I must say,

* Stilling. Iren. page 122, and 68.

with a reverend conforming minister:* "That all the art and power of the world cannot make trifles in the worship of God seem matters of importance to them that relish heaven. What trumpery are habits, various gestures and postures, to a man that is swallowed up in the contemplation of the infinite majesty of the glorious God? or that is lost in the ravishing admiration of his goodness and love? or that is sunk into the lowest abasements and self-abhorrence for his sins? Such a soul may be loaded with human inventions, but he can never look upon them as ornaments or helps to devotion."

Whatever then, be the various ideas and theories of what we call edification: yet still, as none can dispute us out of what we receive most advantage from, as to our bodies, so neither as to our souls. For if no man can be able to persuade me, that his constitution of body is such a standard to mankind, that I and all others are obliged to reckon that food most healthful for us, which the imposer tells us is so to him, though at the same time we experience it to be noxious, or disagreeable to us; I know no more reason why any man should pretend a power of imposing modes and forms on my conscience, which I am dissatisfied with, from no other reason but this, that they appear to be the most excellent or decent to him. So that, as liberty is equally necessary in the one case as in the other, unless we value the health of our bodies above the peace of our consciences, and security of our souls: so the contrary practice, when force is used, can admit of no softer term than that of Antichristian tyranny. I cannot, therefore, but highly approve of what I find in a book† already mentioned: "What possible reasons can be given, (says the author) why such things should not be sufficient for communion with a church, which are sufficient for salvation? And certainly these things are sufficient for that, which are laid down as the necessary duties of Christianity by our Lord and Saviour in his word."

I mention these things, God is my witness, for no private design, to uphold a party, or to serve the ends of it, as such; but to let those that are prejudiced against us know, that we are actuated by religion as a principle, and not as a notion only: and that this is the reason of our dissent from those that share the emoluments of the church among them. Otherwise it were not probable, that we should unite, in acting contrary to our own interest, merely from faction or humour, if we may presume to know our own sentiments; and I hope most, if not all of us, durst not dissemble before the great God all our days, in a matter of so great importance as this is. So that the dissenting of so many persons from the established church, to their own hurt and disadvantage in the world, may be looked upon as no contemptible argument by unbiassed persons, that there are some men that are actuated by religion as a principle, and that take up the ministry otherwise than as a trade.

But I had this farther design in touching upon our unhappy differences; that considering that they do only concern the externals and circumstantials of religion, both ye and all others that peruse these lines and the following discourses, may be taken off from that fury and bigotry, by which so many seem to be possessed at this day, and may learn to mind the great essentials of Christianity more, acting conscientiously yourselves in all things, and judging charitably of those that differ from you, whether they do so of you or not. For what I have said on this head, is not in the least designed to reflect upon those that differ from us, among whom I acknowledge there are many distinguishable, not only for parts and learning, but for piety and moderation also, upon which accounts I cannot but honour and love them, though they should both despise and hate me. Nay, I question not, but even many of the bigots for cathedral worship and its annexed hierarchy (who are for running up these to as near a conformity to Rome as they can, and yet stamp all with a confident pretending to a *Jus Divinum*,) may act from conscience, even in their uncharitableness to them that conscientiously differ from them; yea, in their hatred of them, and rage against them where they have power. But then, it must be remembered, that as their zeal is not according to knowledge: so they are of the same tribe with those of whom our Saviour speaks, when he tells us, *that they would persecute, yea, kill his servants*, when they had opportunity, *believing*, at the same time, *that they did God most acceptable service*. But He immediately adds, *And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor me*. (John xvi. 2, 3.) However, my design is not to reflect even on them, but rather to pity them and wish them more knowledge and a better mind.

For as a contentious, and especially a persecuting temper, was never from God, nor according to the rule of the meek and holy Jesus; whose religion is *first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated:* so such a disposition was never more unseasonable than at this time. For they must be unaccountably unobservant of, and unconcerned with the present state and posture of affairs in Europe, who see not in what danger the Protestant interest is at present; considering what it has lost already, and is in hazard of losing further; together with the sad decay of true Christian piety, as well as unity among all sorts of persons. I could, therefore, wish we

* See P. M. in his Vanity, Mischief, and Danger, of Ceremonies, proposed to the Convocation, and printed Anno 1690.

† Stilling. Iren. pref. p. 8.

might learn a little prudence, even from our Popish adversaries, that we might unite in love, and in design, to promote a general interest, though we attain not to an exact uniformity in all things. For why should not we join as one soul against that *bloody* and *idolatrous party*, when we see them do so against us? though their various sects and orders, such as Franciscans and Dominicans, Jesuits and Jansenists, differ as much from one another, both in their opinions and in their form and habits, (as they are regimented under their several heads or generals, and as they live according to vastly different laws and rules) as we can possibly be supposed to do. But, alas! what moral prognostications have we now, but such as seem to portend ruin and misery to us? when we see the differences of parties grow up into a stated hatred, with a fixed design to ruin one another, and consequently murder the Reformed cause, which we are obliged not only upon religious accounts to appear for, but even upon civil considerations, seeing Popery is inconsistent with *freedom* and *liberty*, than which nothing, in this world, ought to be so dear to us. Can we have forgot what barbarities that inhuman party have committed in the world? For, if we may believe historians,* says a learned man, "Pope Julius in seven years was the occasion of the slaughter of 200,000 Christians. The *massacre in France* cut off 100,000 in three months. P. Perionius avers, that in the persecution of the Albigenses and Waldenses, 1,000,000 lost their lives. From the beginning of the Jesuits till 1580, that is, thirty or forty years, 900,000 perished, saith Balduinus. The Duke of Alva by the hangman put 36,000 to death. Vergerius,† affirms that the Inquisition in thirty years destroyed 150,000. To all this I may add the Irish Rebellion, in which 300,000 were destroyed, as the Lord Orrery reports in a paper printed in the reign of Charles II." And how many have been destroyed in the latter persecutions in France and Piedmont, in the Palatinate and Hungary, none I believe can fully reckon up, besides those that are or have been in the gallies, and that have fled. This is that *Idolatrous Harlot*, so glutted with the blood of the saints, that a late author in his Treatise of Convocations, sets up as a pattern to the Church of England; and that another author in his book, entitled "The Case of the Regale and Pontificate," (to the scandal of the Church of England, for whom they pretend such a zeal,) would so fain have us united unto, and represents, therefore, in such favourable colours. But I hope all true Protestants will easily see *the snake in the grass*. And surely, when we are in hazard of being betrayed within ourselves, we have sufficient reason to awake out of our lethargic sleep, that we may do what possibly we can to save the nations we belong to from approaching desolations, or, if that cannot be, that we may at least save our own souls in the day of the Lord. For seeing we are like to feel the effects of the new conjunction of France and Spain, the election of a young politic pope, and the apostacy of some Protestant princes to the Romish interest, (which together with the impieties and scepticism of a great many within ourselves, are, I am sure no good prognostics,) have we not just reason to prepare for remarkable revolutions? While, therefore, I think of these things, I cannot forbear to give a vent to my thoughts on the great and dark head of futurity; in presenting you with some conjectures in relation to our times, founded upon Scripture prophecy, as far as I understand it.

Therefore, seeing this is the chief design of this discourse, which I have inscribed to you, I hope ye will bear with me in giving you some brief account of the times we are fallen in, and what we may expect if we live much longer. Which I am the rather induced to do, because we are just now entering upon a new age, from which we look back upon seventeen centuries, which have elapsed since our blessed Redeemer came into the world, and may, therefore, be allowed to conjecture, with some just ground perhaps of probability (for I do industriously avoid the fatal rock of positiveness, which so many apocalyptical men have suffered themselves to split upon) what part of the revelation remains to be accomplished.

But since I am to confine myself to a little compass here, as remembering I am writing no book properly, but an epistolary discourse, prefatory to those that follow, with which, therefore, it must keep some proportion: I shall content myself in giving you a few hints, towards the resolution and improvement of that grand APOCALYPTICAL QUESTION, when the reign of Antichristianism or the Papacy began?

There are TWO things, therefore, which lie before me to be considered at this time.

I. I must fulfil my promise in giving you a new resolution of the grand *Apocalyptical Question* concerning the rise of the *Great Antichrist*, or *Rome Papal*. For when we have done this, and fixed this era or epocha, we may, by an easy consequence, see the time of the final fall and destruction of this *dreadful enemy*.

II. I must, in the next place, improve the resolution of this question, both *theoretically*, as a KEY to unriddle the dark Apocalyptical times and periods; and *practically*, in order both to the regulation of your thoughts and the government of your lives, in some very weighty considerations deducible from thence.

The first, thing, therefore, which I have to do, is to attempt the resolution of the prin-

* Dr. More, in his Divine Dialogues, page 161. See also his mystery of Iniquity, lib. ii. chap. 15, 16, &c.

† The same Vergerius that attended on Francis Spira. See his life.

cipal Apocalyptical question concerning the *rise of Antichristianism*.

Now, in order to answer this distinctly (which hath exercised and wearied out all Apocalyptical writers hitherto,) there are some things I would premise as so many *postulata*, which generally all are agreed in, and which Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Durham, and Dr. Cressener, have irrefragably proved.

1. That the revelation contains (Rev. iv. 1; x. 5, 6, 7,) the series of all the remarkable events and changes of the state of the Christian church to the end of the world. 2. That (See Rev. xvii. 1, 5, 18,) *Mystical Babylon* or the great whore, described there doth signify Rome in an *Antichristian Church State*. 3. That, therefore, this cannot be *Rome Pagan* properly, but *Rome Papal*. 4. That the *Seven Heads* of the *Beast*, or the *Seven Kings*, are the seven *Forms of Government*, which obtained successively among the Romans: and seeing the *sixth* of these was that which was only in being in John's time (the former *five* having fallen before,) that, therefore, consequently, the *seventh* head, which under another consideration is called the *eighth*, (the intervenient kingdom of the Ostrogoths being the *seventh* in *number*, though not properly Roman, and therefore, in that sense, none of the *heads* of the Roman government) is the *last species of government*, and that which is called most peculiarly and by a speciality the BEAST, or ANTICHRIST. (Rev. xvii. 10, 11.)

These *postulata* being supposed as certain, (which I would reckon no difficult thing to prove, were it needful,) I must in the next place premise two prelimary considerations, before I come directly to answer the question itself.

The first is this: That the *three* grand apocalyptical numbers of twelve hundred and sixty *days*, forty-two *months*, and *time, times and a half*, are not only *synchronical*, but must be interpreted *prophetically*, so as years must be understood by days.

That these three numbers are synchronical will appear plain to any impartial considerer, that will be at the pains to compare them, as we have them set down in this book of the Revelations, viz. the twelve hundred and sixty *days*, (chap. xi. 3, and chap. xii. 5,) the forty-two *months*, (chap. xi. 2, and chap. xiii. 5,) and the *time, times* and a *half*. (chap. xii. 14.) For it is clear that the *Gentiles treading down the holy city* forty-two *months*, (chap. xii. 2,) is the cause of the *witnesses prophesying for twelve hundred and sixty days in sackcloth*, (v. 3,) and is not the *woman, or church's being in the wilderness* for the same term of days, (chap. xii 6,) any other than a new representation of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth? Seeing this must be while the beast is worshipped and served by the whole Roman world, during men's lunacy of forty-two months continuance, (chap. xiii. 5.) And therefore, seeing the woman is said to be in the wilderness-state of desolation and persecution, for a time, and times, and half a time, in order thus to be preserved from the beast and serpent, as we see chap. xii. 14. It is likewise plain, that this number of three years and a half, must be the very same with the two former numbers. Only it is to be observed by the way, that this period of time, when it is mentioned in relation to the church, is spoken of with respect to the sun, either as to his diurnal or annual rotation: whereas, when it is described in relation to the beast's unstable kingdom of night and darkness, it is made mention of with respect to the inconstant luminary, which changes its face continually, while it makes our months. And hence it is that the church is represented, (chap. xii. 1,) under the emblem of *a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet*.

Now as these numbers are synchronical, and the same; so it is easy to prove that they must be understood prophetically for years. I shall not insist here upon the conjecture of a learned man;* that there was no diurnal rotation of the earth before the fall, and consequently, no days of twenty-four hours, but only an annual rotation of this our planetary world; which he gives us the original reason of the Scripture's putting days for years frequently. For whatever be in this, it is plain that the Scriptures speak thus in several places; by putting a lesser number figuratively for a greater, as well as definite one for an indefinite. Witness the appointment of the *week of years*, (Exod. xxxiii. 10, 11,) which is spoken of as if it were a *week of days*, (v. 12;) the *seventh year* of which is, therefore, called *sabbatical*, with respect to the *seventh-day sabbath*. In the same way of speaking, Ezekiel was commanded to lie three hundred and ninety days on his left side, and forty on his right, each *day* for a *year*, as God himself says, chap. iv. 5, 6. So likewise God punished the murmuring Israelites with forty years abode in the wilderness, with relation to the forty days that were spent in searching for the land of Canaan. (Numb. xiv. 32.) The seven years of Nebuchadnezzar's *Lycanthropy* is thus called, indefinitely, *days* or *times*. (Dan. iv. 32, 34.) Nay, our Saviour himself speaks in this dialect when he calls the years of his ministry days, saying, "I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. (Luke xiii. 32.) But the most remarkable place to our purpose is the famous prophecy of *Daniel's seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety days*, (chap. ix. 24,) reaching down from the edict of Artaxerxes Longimanus in his twenthieth year, (Neh. ii. 1—10,) to our Saviour's suffering at Jerusalem; which was exactly four hundred and ninety *prophetical years*, not *Julian* ones: the not distinguishing of which has

* Whiston's Theory of the Earth, pages 8, 79, 81. See Hypoth. 3.

hitherto confounded all interpreters, as I might show at large, were this a proper place for it. But what the difference between these is, we shall quickly see.

In the mean time, I am now to prove that one thousand two hundred and sixty *days* are to be understood, in a *prophetical* sense for *years;* for if I can prove this, it will necessarily follow, that the other numbers must be so interpreted also; since they are the same with this. Now that the one thousand two hundred and sixty *days* cannot be taken literally, but *prophetically*, will appear from hence; that it is impossible to conceive how so many, great, and wonderful actions, which are prophesied to fall out in that short time, could happen during the space of *three* solar years *and an half;* such as *e. g.*, the obtaining power over all kindreds, tongues, and nations; the world's wondering at, and submitting unto the Beast's reign; and the setting up an image to the imperial head, and causing it to be worshipped, instead of the living emperor's, &c.

And, besides these things, seeing the one thousand two hundred and sixty *days* are the whole time of the *Papal authority*, which is not to be totally destroyed until the *great* and *remarkable appearance of Christ*, upon the pouring out of the *seventh vial;* and that, therefore, Christ will have the honour of destroying him *finally* himself, (though this iniquity began to work even in the apostolic times:) wherefore, we may certainly conclude, that it must take up some centuries of years to carry on this *abomination that maketh desolate.* For though the Lord will gradually consume or waste this great adversary *by the spirit of his mouth*, yet he will not sooner abolish him than by the *appearing of his own presence*, (2 Thess. ii. 8,) as* I choose both to render and understand the words.

The second preliminary consideration is, that in order to understand the *prophetical years* aright, we must reduce them to *Julian years*, or such as are in use with us *now* in Europe.

This is no idle or chimerical inquiry; seeing the ignorance of this has misled all our great Apocalyptical men hitherto in their calculation; and yet unless we are able to adjust the difference between prophetical and Julian years, we must still reckon at a venture, without any certainty of the truth and exactness of our arithmetic. Therefore, that we may understand this difference, we are to remember, that the ancients were far more rude and indistinct in their calculation of time than we have been since. And indeed such is their confusion this way, that we are obliged to God's providence in giving us the exact compass of a prophetical year, even in this book, by fixing the *synchronism* of the *three numbers* above mentioned. For by these it is determined, that thirty days make a month, and twelve of such months a year. So that one thousand two hundred and sixty days being divided into three years and an half (or time and times and an half in the apocalyptical dialect,) three hundred and sixty days must make up a year, without the additional five days and odd hours and minutes that are added in the calculation of the Julian year. For the *Julian* (and *Gregorian*) months consisting some of thirty, and some of thirty-one days (excepting February only,) and the years consequently, of three hundred and sixty-five days; there must needs be some considerable difference in the revolution of many centuries. Which difference appears still greater, if we consult the late curious astronomical calculations of Petavius, Tycho, Kepler, and others. But since their exactness hath only added five hours to every year (together with some minutes, firsts, seconds, &c., *communibus annis*, which they themselves are not fully agreed in) I shall not be so nice upon this point, as to follow them exactly in all their criticisms this way. However, since five hours additional to a year arise to an entire day, in the revolution of one hundred and sixty-three years, it ought not to be altogether neglected. But passing even these, and considering only thee five days that are added to the three hundred and sixty, in our ordinary years, we will find that the one thousand two hundred and sixty days in the Revelation being reduced to years, are eighteen years short of Julian years, in the prophetical reckoning, by reason of the

* The learned Dr. Whitby, in his late Paraphrase and Commentary upon the Epistles, does, indeed, advance a new notion, on this verse and chapter, viz. that the Jewish Sanhedrim, government and nation, is primarily and chiefly understood here by the Apostle, as the man of sin and Antichrist, both upon the account of their opposing themselves to Christ and persecuting of his followers, and upon the account also of their rebellion against the Romans. And he has said so much for the proof of this, that it may be thought to contain a refutation of my interpretation of the place. But even upon the supposition that all that the doctor says for his opinion should be true; yet it will be found no way to invalidate what I advance here. For all that are acquainted with the Jewish and apostolic writings know, that besides a first sense to be observed in prophecies, there is a second and remoter one more tacitly insinuated frequently, as the principal design of the Spirit of God. I might show this in innumerable instances, especially in the ancient prophecies that relate to David) or some other person, in the first sense or typical one, but in the Messiah ultimately and completely. But I shall not insist upon any thing of this kind now, seeing so many have done it already: and there is no need to do it here, seeing Dr. Whitby himself doth grant all I desire, when he says, in his preface to this epistle, page 383: "But that I may not wholly differ from my brethren in this matter, I grant these words may secondary sense (in which expression I only differ from the doctor, seeing I look upon it to be the principal sense because it is the second) be attributed to the Papal Antichrists, or Man of Sin, and may be signally fulfilled in him, in the destruction of him, by the Spirit of Christ's mouth, he being the successor to the Apostate Jewish Church, to whom these characters agree, as well as to her; and therefore, in the annotations I have still given a place to this interpretation also."

additional days turned into years in the ordinary accounts now, above the Apocalyptical reckoning.

To demonstrate which, I present you with the following scheme:

The Prophetical Year.		*The Julian Year.*	
One	360	One	365
	360		365
Two	720	Two	730
Three	1080	Three	1095
Half	180	Half	183
Three years and a half,	1260	Three years and a half,	1278

Now if, according to this computation, we subtract one thousand two hundred and sixty Apocalyptical years from one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight Julian, or Gregorian ones, (I call them so *ore rotundo*, overlooking the smaller measures of time,) there remain eighteen years to be cut off.

To apply this, therefore, to our design. If we may suppose that *Antichrist* began his reign in the year 606, the additional one thousand two hundred and sixty years of his duration, were they *Julian* or ordinary years, would lead us down to the year 1866, as the last period of the *seven-headed monster*. But seing they are prophetical years only, we must cast away eighteen years in order to bring them to the exact measure of time that the Spirit of God designs in this book. And thus the final period of *Papal usurpations*, (supposing that he did, indeed, rise in the year 666) must conclude with the year 1848.

And now that I have hinted at the time of Antichrist's *rise*, as the conclusion of the preliminary considerations, I must proceed to prove this to be in one sense the true æra of the *Papal Beast's reign*. And here it is that I find myself extremely straightened, in discoursing of so great a subject in so narrow a compass. All, therefore, that I can say here will amount to a few short hints only, though, perhaps, no inconsiderable ones.

Seeing, therefore, as I said before in the fourth Postulatum, it is plain from Rev. xvii. 10, that the *imperial government* was the regent head of the Roman Beast at the time of the vision, we have only the two following heads to consider as to their rise and duration. Let these things, therefore, be minded here.

1. That the *seventh head*, or king of Rome, (as I hinted before,) whose character is, that he was immediately to succeed to the imperial government, and to continue but a short space, (Rev. xvii. 10,) that, I say, this government could be no other than that of the Ostrogoths in Italy.

For, it is plain, that the imperial dignity was extinguished in Italy and in the western parts of the empire, by Odoacer, the king of the Heruli, who forced Augustulus, the last sprig of an emperor, to abdicate his throne and power, in the year 475, or 476, as others say. And though this Odoacer was soon destroyed by Theodoric, the king of the Ostrogoths, yet the same form of regal government was continued by Theodoric and his successors. And though this kingdom continued for near eighty years, reckoning from Odoacer to Tias, yet the angel might justly call this a short time: for so it was, if compared either with the preceding imperial, or succeeding Papal government. Which suggests a very strong argument against some, who would make this seventh king to denote the oriental empire, which, as it began long before this time, so lasted many centuries afterwards, and was not totally extinct till Mahomet the Great's time, in the year 1453. And surely this kingdom was sufficient to constitute a new head of the Roman people, seeing Rome and Italy were subjected entirely to those Gothish kings, and that they not only acted with the same authority that the emperors had used before, (excepting that they abstained from that title, by a special providence, that they might not be confounded with that government) but were owned by the senate and people of Rome as their superiors, yea by the emperors of the East also; as might easily be proved* from historians, particularly Cassiodorus,† who was chief minister of state to two of those kings.

Whence it doth plainly appear, that this kingdom of Ostrogoths was the seventh head, that was to continue a short time. And that, therefore, it follows, 1. That the change wrought by Constantine the Great, both as to the seat and religion of the empire, could not be looked upon as a new head; seeing the old government in all other respects was continued. And, 2. Neither can any person justly suppose that the form of government was altered, when the empire was divided into the East and West; seeing, in all other respects also, the imperial authority and rule was preserved. Therefore, 3. It follows also, that the Papal government was not regnant until the destruction of the Gothish kingdom in Italy: for there could not be two supreme heads of the church of Rome at the same time.

Therefore, 2. We may conclude that the last head of the beast, which is the Papal, did arise either immediately upon the extirpation of the Gothish kingdom, or some time after. But it could not rise to its power immediately after, seeing Justinian did, by the conquest of Italy, revive the imperial government again there, which by that means was healed after the deadly wound which the Heruli and the Goths had given it. Though I confess Justinian's conquests of Italy laid a foundation for the Pope's rise and paved the way for his

* See Baron, ad Ann. 472, 475, &c. Petavi Ration, Temp. lib. vii. cap. 5., Bellarm. de Translat. Imp. Rom. lib. i. cap. 9, &c.

† In lib. Variarum. lib. i. ep. 23, 31, &c., lib. iii. ep. 45, &c., lib. iii. ep. 16, 18., lib. viii. ep. 2, 3, 4, &c.

advancement, both by the penal and sanguinary laws which he made against all those that dissented from the Romish church, and by the confusions that followed upon Narses his bringing in the Lombards. For during the struggles of them and the Exarchat, the pope played his game so that the emperor Phocas found it his interest to engage him to his party, by giving him the title of Supreme and Universal Bishop.

Therefore, we may justly reckon that the papal head took its first rise from that remarkable year, 606, when Phocas did in a manner devolve the government of the West upon him, by giving him the title of universal bishop. From which period, if we date the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, they lead us down (as I said already) to the year 1866, which is 1848, according to prophetical calculation. Or, if a bare title of this sort be not thought sufficient to constitute the pope head of the beast, we may reckon this two years later, viz. from the year 608, when Boniface the Fourth did first publicly authorise idolatry, by dedicating the Pantheon to the worship of the Virgin Mary and all the saints.

Now, it is very remarkable, that in the year 666 Pope Vitalian did first ordain, that all public worship should be in Latin. And therefore, however the notion of Irenæus* has been of late ridiculed, who observed that the characteristic number of the beast, viz. six hundred and sixty-six, answering to the number of a man's name, was to be found in the word Λατεινος, from whence he concluded that he was to be a Roman; I cannot but think there is something remarkable in this (even though the numerical letters of other words should jump with this number also) not so much because of the antiquity of the notion, as upon the account of the reason he suggests to us, for this, when he says, that though he grants that other names (as that of ϛ' ναυθαι) may be so rendered, yet he fixes upon this,† because the Latin monarchy is the last of all, and therefore, the beast must relate to this or none. Wherein I suppose he alludes to Daniel's account of the four monarchies, (chap. ii.—vii.) And indeed the little horn that arose out of the head of the fourth beast, (chap. vii. 8,) seems not unfitly to represent not only Antiochus Epiphanes, but the papal Antichrist, whose type he may, therefore, be supposed to be: for as he supplanted three kings, in allusion to which that little horn is said to have plucked up three horns before it by the roots; so did the Papal government rise also upon the ruins of the Exarchat, the Lombards, and the authority of the emperors in Italy.

I believe this account of Antichrist's rise will not be very acceptable to some, whose zeal for the pope's downfall has made them entertain hope of living to see that remarkable time; which has made them invent plausible schemes to prove that this great enemy was seated in his regal dignity long before the year 606. But if a man will trace truth impartially, he will have reason to think, that the rise of this adversary could not be before that time. Nay, I must tell you, that I do not reckon the full rise of the pope to the headship of the empire till a later date still. For though the pope got the title of *universal bishop* at that time, yet he was afterwards, for a long time, subject in temporal concerns to the emperors. And therefore, I cannot reckon him to have been, in a proper and full sense, head of Rome, until he was so in a secular as well as ecclesiastical sense. And this was not until the days of Pipin, by whose consent he was made a secular prince, and a great part of Italy given to him as Peter's patrimony. So that as Boniface the Third, (and his successors) by assuming the title of universal bishop, was the forerunner of Antichrist, as Gregory the Great prophesied he would be, who should be known in the world by that proud title; so likewise, we may conclude that Antichrist was, indeed, come, when Paul the first became a temporal prince also. Phocas, therefore, did only proclaim the pope to be the last head of Rome, in the apocalyptical sense: but it was Pipin who gave him the solemn investiture, and seated him on his throne, which Charlemagne did afterwards confirm to him.

Now as near as I can trace the time of this donation of Pipin, it was in or about the year 758, about the time that Pope Paul the First began to build the church of St. Peter and St. Paul. Now, if we make this the era of the papal kingdom, the twelve hundred and sixty years will not run out before the year 2018, according to the computation of Julian

* Iræn. adv. Hæret, lib. v. cap. 30.

† It ought to be observed here, that not only the Greek word, but even the Hebrew contains the number six hundred and sixty-six, in the numerical letters thereof. whether we make use of רומיית Roman, scil. Sedes, or רמעניש Romanus vel Latinus. As will appear from the folloiwng scheme:

ר	200	ר	200	λ	30
ו	6	מ	40	α	1
מ	40	ע	70	τ	300
י	10	נ	50	ε	5
י	10	י	6	ι	10
ת	400	ש	300	ν	50
	666		666	ο	70
				ς	200
					666

And, whereas, Bellarmin objects, that Latinus should be rendered by a single Iota, and not by *ei*, he is exceedingly mistaken: for not only Irenæus ---- the word thus, but all the Greeks do the same, as is plain in innumerable instances, such as in the names Αντεινος Σαβεινος, which the Romans pronounce Antoninus, Sabinus. Nay, the ancient Romans spake the same way as the Greeks, as is plain in Plautus and the fragments of Ennius, with whom nothing is more common than *queis* for *quis*, *preimus* for *primus*, *capteivei* for *captivi*, for *lateinei* for *latini*, &c.

years; but, reducing these to prophetical ones, the expiration of the papal kingdom ends exactly in the year 2000, according to our vulgar reckoning. And, if what I suggusted above be true, that Antichrist shall not be finally destroyed until the coming of Christ, then may this calculation be looked upon to be very considerable: for it has been a very ancient opinion, that the world would last only six thousand years; that, according to the old traditional prophecy of the house of Elias, the world should stand as many millenaries as it was made in days; and that, therefore, as there were two thousand years from the creation to Abraham, without a written directory of religion, and two thousand from thence to Christ, under the old economy of the law, so there would be two thousand years more under the Messiah. So that after the militant state of the Christian church is run out, in the year 2000, it is to enter upon that glorious sabbatical millenary, when the saints shall reign on the earth, in a peaceable manner, for a thousand years more; after the expiration of which, Satan should be let loose to play a new game, and men shall begin to apostatize almost universally from the truth, gathering themselves together, under the character of Gog and Magog, from the four corners or parts of the world, until they have reduced the church to a small compass. But, when they have brought the saints to the last extremity, Christ himself will appear in his glory, and destroy his enemies with fire from heaven. (Rev. xx. 9.) Which denotes the great conflagration. (2 Pet. iii. 10, 11.) Which is followed with the resurrection, and Christ's calling men before him into judgment. And perhaps, the time of this judgment will take up the greatest part or the whole of another millenary of years; that as there were four thousand years from the creation to his first coming, there may be four from thence to his triumphant entry into heaven with all his saints. For though the Scripture calls this time a day, yet we know what Peter says, that "a thousand years and a day are the same thing in Divine reckoning." (2 Pet. iii. 8.) But that all men that ever lived should be publicly judged in a day, or year, or century, so as to have all their life and actions tried and searched into, is, to me I confess, inconceivable, not indeed, in relation to God, but in relation to men and angels, who must be convinced of the equity of the procedure and sentence of the judge.

But to return: I cannot forbear to take notice of one thing here, that the year 758 was the year 666 from the persecution of Domitian, when John was in Patmos, and wrote this book (as Tertullian, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, and all the ancients, excepting Epiphanius, tell us,) which though some say was A. D. 95, was, most probably, in or about the year 92, the persecution of Domitian having begun two years before. So that here we have another characteristic mark of the number of the beast.

And now, I hope I have said enough of the *future part of time*, as to the general idea which I think the Revelation gives of it. But I must proceed one step farther with you, and consider under what *revolution of time* we are at present; that we may thence see what we are to expect, and how we are to act.

So that here I find myself insensibly taken off from any farther direct prosecution of the question proposed by way of answer thereunto. And,

Therefore, II. I proceed to improve what I have said as to this question, both theoretically and practically.

And, first, I shall advance something here, as a theoretical improvement of what I have said upon the former head. For by this key we may attain, in a great measure, to unlock the dark apocalyptical periods and times; those I mean that relate to the continuance of the papal power, both as to his gradual growth and increase first, and his decay afterwards, until his last and final destruction. And in relation to these, the far greatest part of the Apocalypse must be understood.

Now, in order to this performance, I must premise this one thing, viz. that the *Seven Seals, Trumpets, and Vials* (in which is contained the order and series of the whole apocalyptical prophecy, and to the explication and illustration of which all the other particular visions are subservient,) that I say these are joined together by the link of the seventh seal, and seventh trumpet; so as the seventh seal doth as it were produce or include the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet the seven vials in the same manner.

This I should reckon no difficult thing to demonstrate, but that it would be too long to insist upon it in this place. And, seeing Mr. Durham has done it in a great measure already, I pass it now the more easily. Only let me desire you to consider, that it was not until after the opening of the seventh seal that John saw the angels with the seven trumpets. (chap. viii. 1, 2.) And that it was after the sounding of the seventh trumpet also, that he tells us, "he saw αλλο σημειον μεγα και θαυμαστον, another sign great and wonderful," (chap. xv. 1,) which was the vision of the vials. So that I wonder that Mr. Mede, Dr. More, and almost all others, have suffered themselves to be confounded in their interpretations, by reason of their not observing this, and consequently by jumbling some of the trumpets with the seals, and most of the vials with the trumpets.

Now, this being supposed, we will find the series of time run in the following order, according to this threefold septenary of periods, which do insensibly run out one into the other.

The first septenary of seals relates to the Christian church during the state of the Ro-

man empire. And these do accordingly run in this order.

The first Seal exhibits the state of the church "under the conduct of a glorious rider on a white horse, having a bow in his hand, and a crown given unto him who went out conquering and to conquer." (chap. vi. 2.) Under which emblem Christ himself is represented, going forth upon his conquests over Jews and Gentiles. And as this relates to Christ's first victory over his enemies, after his commission to his disciples "to preach the gospel to all nations," (Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20,) and the "pouring down of his Spirit for this end, on the day of Pentecost," (Acts ii.;) so the full completion of it is not until the end of time. For after all other horsemen and enemies of the church have done their utmost against Christ and his people, we find this horseman leading them all in triumph as his captives, and proceeding in his conquests to make a full and final end of them: (for which see chap. xix. 11, 12, &c.) So that this *seal* begins with A.D. 33 or 34, and does not end until the end of time, as to its full completion. But if we reckon it only in relation to the beginning of the next seal (Christ's conquests being darkened as to the outward view of men, by what follows) we shall see that immediately.

The second Seal, (chap. vi. 3, 4,) under the emblem of a rider upon a red horse, (who had a great sword given him in order to take peace from the earth, and to engage men in wars,) represents the state of the empire from the time that Nero made war on the Jews, A. D. 66, and so contains the civil wars of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, when men did so remarkably kill one another; and the wars of Vespasian and Titus against the Jews, completed afterwards by the terrible destruction of that nation under Hadrian; together with his other wars, and the preceding persecutions of Domitian and Trajan, and the conquests of this last prince. So that as this begins with A. D. 66, it ends with Hadrian's wars, Ann. 134, or with his life, A.D. 138.

The third Seal, (chap. vi. 5, 6,) begins, therefore, with A.D. 138; where, under the hieroglyphic of a rider on a black horse, with a pair of balances in his hand, to weigh and measure all things exactly, is set forth the excellent reigns of the admirable Antoninus Pius and Philosophus. And therefore, this seal runs out in the year 180.

The fourth Seal, (chap. vi. 7,) represents the Roman horse turned pale, and the rider changed from a grave and awful judge to a murderer, so as to be called *death*, by reason of his throwing so many into *hades*, or the future state, by immature deaths. Where we have a very remarkable account of the state of the Roman empire after the decease of the brave Antoninus Philosophus, under the barbarities of Commodus, the shortlived reigns of Pertinax and Didius Julianus, but especially under the severe and bloody Septimius Severus, in his wars against Percennius Nigerius, Albinus and others, and under his son Caracalla; and afterwards under Macrinus, Heliogabalus, (the reign of the excellent Alexander Severus being but a short breathing to the empire and the Christians,) Maximinus and his son Pupienus, Balbinus and Gordianus, and Philippus and his son; with whose death I think this seal runs out in the year 250. And with the death of these Philippi, who favoured Christianity the four *evangelical living creatures* (which our translation renders *beasts* most unaccountably,) cease to speak openly.

The fifth Seal, therefore, discovers the state of the Christian church to be exceedingly languishing and melancholy, as if the saints were all slain, praying and crying for vengeance against their persecutors, while they are represented as lying under the altar. (chap. vi. 9, 10, 11.) So that this period begins with Decius, the first universal persecutor of Christians, (for all the former persecutions under Nero, Domitian, Trajan, and the Antonines, were but provincial ones, and that of Maximinus against the *ministers* only,) who began his reign and persecution together, in the year 250, and was seconded in it by Valerian, (for the short reigns of Trebonianus Gallus, and Æmilianus, hardly deserve to be taken notice of in this case.) Now the souls of the martyrs are desired to rest patiently, until the confused reign of Gallienus should run out, and the thirty tyrants that rose in his time should be cut off, together with the shortlived Claudius Gothicus; seeing after that little interval, their brethren were also to suffer still farther under Rome pagan, viz. under Aurelian, and afterwards (when the short reigns of Tacitus, Probus, Carus, and Carinus, should be over,) under the cruel persecution raised against them by Dioclesian and Maximianus elder and younger, together with Severus and Maximinus. So that this seal ends with the conclusion of this last persecution begun by Diocletian, and so expires, A. D. 306.

The sixth Seal, (chap. vi. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17,) gives us an account of God's gracious answer at length to the prayer of the slain witnesses, in the destruction of Rome pagan, after their cup was made full by the last cruel persecution. And this is described as if heaven and earth had come to an end. For so the prophets use to represent the ruins of kingdoms and monarchies, as we see among other places. (Jer. iv. 24. Isa. xiii. 10, and xxiv. 21, 23, and Joel ii. 10.) So that this seal contains the great and terrible wars of Constantine the Great against all those last tyrants, from the year 306 to the death of the last pagan emperor, Licinius, A.D. 324.

The seventh Seal, therefore, (chap. viii. 1,) represents the short breathing of the church and peace of the Christians under Constantine, from the year 313, when he first published an edict in their favour, and particularly from the death of Licinius, A.D. 324,

to his own decease in the year 337, immediately upon which the scene alters. And then begins

The *Second Septenary* of *Trumpets*, gives us an account of the state of the church in relation to the gradual growth and increase of her antichristian enemies, though in a way also of judgment upon them. Which I represent to you in the following series and order.

The first Trumpet, (chap. viii. 7,) began a little after Constantine's death, in the wars between his eldest and youngest son, or at the death of the first in battle, and of the last by the usurpation of Magnentius, which was a kind of mixed storm of hail, fire, and blood. The continuance of it was in the persecutions against the orthodox by Constantius and Valens, with the intervention of that against all Christians by Julian the Apostate. And the conclusion of it seems to be the usurpation of Maximus upon the death of Gratianus, and afterwards the death of Valentinian the Second; and, finally, the wars and death of Theodosius. So that it began with the year 339, and ended A.D. 395.

The second Trumpet, (chap. viii. 8, 9,) represents a great kingdom, under the emblem of a mountain (see Jer. li. 25,) burning with fire, (i. e., in a cruel and fierce manner,) and thrown into the midst of the body politic, or empire of Rome, represented by the sea, (see chap. xviii. 15,) by which the third part of it became blood. By which we are unquestionably to understand the irruption of the barbarous nations of the Vandals and Goths into the Roman dominions. This began about the death of Theodosius, and made a formidable progress, A.D. 405, in the days of Arcadius and Honorius, by Radagisus, and afterwards Alaricus, who took Rome, A.D. 410. And it was continued during the inroads of Athaulphus the Goth, (who pillaged the great city, A.D. 414,) and of Gensericus the Vandal, and of Attila the Hun, into Italy and other Roman provinces, which they, and others about that time, wasted miserably to the year 455, and afterwards to the year 476.

The third Trumpet, (chap. viii. 10, 11,) doth plainly represent the destruction of the Western Empire, by a star falling from the heaven of its glory as a burning lamp: for, after it had struggled with its fatal destiny, under the obscure Cæsars, Avitus, Majoranus, Severus, &c., it did at length expire with Augustulus, A.D. 475, or 476. This star was called Wormwood, because of the bitter troubles this brought upon the empire: for the Ostrogoths planted themselves in Italy, and reigned as arbitrarily as the emperors had ever done. So that this period began with the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, A.D. 476, and ended with A.D. 553.

The fourth Trumpet, (chap. viii. 12,) brings yet further desolations on Rome, by darkening its splendour and glory, represented by the eclipsing of the sun for a third part of it, and the moon and stars also in like manner. By which we are to understand, no doubt, the decay of the imperial power and authority in the West, by the Lombards and the Exarchat afterwards. So that this trumpet lasted from the year 568 to the year 758, when Pipin made the pope in a manner king of Rome (who, in requital of his kindness, gave his son Charlemagne the empty title of Emperor of Rome, making thus the succeeding western empire an image of the ancient one, (Rev. xiii. 14, 15,) by which both the power of the Lombards, of the Exarchat, and the emperors did, as it were, terminate in him. And as the Exarchat ended A.D. 752, so the Lombards were totally expelled Italy a little after, viz. in the year 773.

Now follows a threefold wo, which makes up the subject of the three following trumpets, which are, therefore, called the *wo-trumpets*, because of the remarkableness of these judgments above the former. Therefore,

The fifth Trumpet, (chap. ix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,) brings forth the first wo. The description of which is long, and the figures many; so that I cannot be supposed to say much on so large a head here. Let a short account satisfy you. In the first place, therefore, we are to understand that no other than the bishop of Rome can be meant by the star that fell from heaven. For this is the symbol of the gospel ministry, (chap. i. 20,) and agrees not, therefore, with Mahomet. Neither can the place this star fell from, viz. heaven, which denotes the glorious and holy state of the church, agree to any other, than one that apostatizeth from the service of Christ, to the service of the world and Satan. So that as ancient Babylon is said to fall from the heaven of temporal glory as Lucifer or the morning star of the nations, (Isa. xiv. 12;) so is the bishop of Rome said to fall from the spiritual heaven of his primitive glory and purity; being degenerated from the first angel of light in the church, to be the grand angel of darkness: and becoming thus the prince of incarnate devils, the key of the bottomless pit, (which he and his followers boast of as the key of St. Peter,) being put into his hand by the old serpent, for carrying on the black designs of hell. 2. The dark pitchy smoke that came out of the pit, upon his opening it, was certainly designed to signify the ignorance that did then prevail in the world, and the gross and horrid errors that were spread abroad and vended for divine truths by the sottish monks, that then swarmed abroad under various names and leaders, and particularly the idolatry that then began to prevail universally in the world. For about that time, though several of the Greek emperors did stiffly oppose image worship, yet the popes did at length prevail, though multitudes on both sides lost their lives in this quarrel. 3. The locusts that came out of this smoke were the Saracens, that followed Mahomet, who compiled the model of his

religion, by the help of Jews and Christian heretics, especially of Sergius, a Nestorian monk,* whom the Arabian and Turkish writers called Bahira. These Arabian locusts (whose higera or era is dated from Mahomet's flight from Mecca, A. D. 622, a little after the pope got the title of universal bishop, A. D. 606,) did in a a little time so increase, that they conquered or overrun a great many countries in a very little time. For they overflowed Persia, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and other places, about the year 729. They extended their arms into India, A. D. 643, and into Spain, A. D. 711, and ravaged several parts of France from A. D. 721 to the year 726, till they were routed at length with great slaughter by Charles Martel, about the year 728. However, they continued after that to be a scourge to the Christians, especially under the reign of the great Almanzor, until about the year 772, when† the Turks began to grow famous. So that the five months or one hundred and fifty years, wherein they tormented the Christians (though they had no power to destroy their empire) was from 622 to 772. But we must not imagine that these five months of years are the period of this trumpet. For this must be reckoned from 758 to A. D. 1067, or thereabouts, when Tangrolipix, the Turk, put an end to the Saracen empire, by conquering the Caliph of Persia. Now, therefore, in the fourth place, (to pass by the other things observable in this Saracen Wo-Trumpet,) let it be considered that as the apostate bishop of Rome, is called the angel or messenger of the bottomless pit; so Mahomet, the king and prophet of the Saracen locusts, is called Abaddon or Apollyon, (v. 2,) *i. e.*, a Destroyer, as carrying on his religion by sword and violence: from whence his locust followers are said (v. 10,) to have stings like scorpions, by which they poisoned the souls of men, if they did at all spare their bodies; for they were, in other respects, swift and strong as horses, and had faces like men in their reasoning as well as fighting for their superstition; adorned with hair like women, appearing soft and insinuating at first view, though armed with lions' teeth, as being fierce and cruel. By reason of which qualifications they got many victories, and are, therefore, represented as crowned with crowns of gold, (v. 7, 8, 9.) But upon the whole matter this trumpet, as it supposes the rise of the Saracen empire, from the era of the higera 622; and the begun rise of the pope from the year 606 or 608: so after five months or a hundred and fifty years, *i. e.*, to the year 772, the Saracen preparations continued, and the papal from 606 or 608 to 756 or 758. So that the duration of this begins with A. D. 758, and expires, in relation to that part of it that concerns the Saracens, about the year 1060. But in as far as it relates to the popish antichristian party, it is continued down through the next trumpet and the last both. But seeing the Saracens are brought in here as a scourge to the worshippers of the beast, the Turks succeeded them in this work, therefore, the trumpet is denominated from this visible scene of affairs, and we must accordingly suppose that it ends with them.

The sixth Trumpet, therefore, which is called the second Wo, brings in the Turks upon the stage of the Roman empire: who are represented as four angels or messengers of judgment, (chap. xiii. 13, 14, 15, &c.,) which were bound on the other side of the river Euphrates for a time; but are now let loose to pass that river and make their inroads into the Roman empire, and to erect themselves into a monarchy upon the ruins of it. Now they are called four angels, because they were then divided into four sultanies or principalities, as their ambassadors told the Emperor Justin, in the year 570, as is related by one of the Byzantine historians, and taken notice of by all writers* on this head. For at their remarkable passing the river Euphrates, they were under the command of Solyman Shahum and his three sons; and when he was drowned in the passage, they brought themselves under four other captains, viz. Otrogules, and his three sons; of whom one was the famous Ottoman, who a little after laid the foundations of that great empire, over which his family keeps the sceptre to this day. They are described as horsemen, for so they generally were, fighting on horseback for the most part, of which the horse's tail is still a monument, being used as their chief ensign of honour and command.

Their number was prodigious, and might be at that time, perhaps, exactly two hundred thousand thousand, as it seems to be here asserted: for they seldom sent out an army of fewer than a thousand thousand fighting men at once. Their polished breast-plates represented fire, when shone upon by the sun: and their horses are said to be like lions for fierceness. And seeing fire-arms began then to be used in war (of which they had great store, together with cannon, of prodigious bigness, which did facilitate their taking of cities, and particularly Constantinople) their shooting these on horseback is represented as if the fire and smoke and brimstone had come out of their horses' mouths, their pieces being discharged over these heads. With these they killed the bodies of men, and with their tails, which had heads also, they killed the souls of those

* See Dr. Prideaux's Interesting Life of Mahomet, pages 45, 46, 47, 48. A new edition of which, just published, contains his Vindication of Christianity from the charge of Imposture.—BAYNES, 1808.

† See the Authors of the Turkish History, put out by Conradus, Clauserus.

* See Pococke's Supplem. ad Abul-phar, pages 106, 108; and Leunclav. Hist. page 86.

poor creatures that were stung or bit by their poisonous doctrines: insomuch, that the third part of men, *i. e.* the third part of the ancient Roman empire (viz. that part which fell to Constantius, when Constantine divided the whole among his three sons,) was destroyed and conquered by them. Now if we inquire into the time of this trumpet we have an exact calculation given of it. For they are said to be prepared for an hour and a day, and a month, and a year: an hour being ever used indefinitely in this book for a season or period of time, we are accordingly to take it here. But days, years, and months, being used definitely always, we must likewise interpret them so here also. So that the sense of the place is, that the Turks were loosed from Euphrates, as being prepared instruments in the hand of God, for the ruin of the Grecian empire, for a certain hour or season: even for a day, a month, and a year. For in that period of time, they destroyed the Eastern empire. For a prophetical year being three hundred and sixty, and a month thirty: these with the addition of one more make up the period of three hundred and ninety-one years. Now, we took notice before, that in or about the year 1067, *i. e.*, 1062 of prophetical reckoning, Tangrolipix erected the Turkish empire upon the ruins of that of the Saracens. From thence, therefore, if we compute the three hundred and ninety-one years, we are led down to the year 1458, according to our ordinary computation; but according to prophetical reckoning, to the remarkable year 1453, when Mahomet the Great took Constantinople, and so erected his own empire upon the ruins of the Grecian. For as it is very remarkable that John does not make the period of three hundred and ninety-one years to be the whole duration of the Turkish empire, but only its preparation for after action, from its first rise, to its highest exaltation; so we see how exactly this is fulfilled in the event; which, therefore, I hope is no unedifying speculation.

Now, seeing there is a remarkable stop and void, as it were, between the end of the sixth trumpet, and the beginning of the seventh, which is filled up with the account of the slaying of the witnesses, in chap. 11, I do humbly conceive, that whatever particular slaughter of the saints were before or may be afterwards, the great slaughter must have been during that interval of time. For this could not be during the height of the two former woes upon Antichrist and his followers. And much less can it be supposed to be after the sound of the second trumpet, and while God's last plagues upon the beast are a pouring out. I do, therefore, reckon, that the witnesses who prophesied in sackcloth from the beginning of papal superstitions, were the honest Piedmontese, Albigenses, and Waldenses; who were slain at length, after they had stood the shock of all former attacks, particularly that of Simon Montfort, with his 500,000 croissades, whom Innocent the Third, diverted from the Saracen war, in order to extirpate that good people, about the year 1200. Now the slaying of these witnesses began in the year 1416, when John Huss, and afterwards Jerome of Prague, were burnt, but came not to its height, until the Bohemian Calixtines complied with the Council of Basil, A. D. 1434, after which the faithful Taborites were totally ruined, as well as their brethren in Piedmont, France, &c., which happened about the year 1492. For they being destroyed, the Calixtines were no better than the dead carcasses, (as they are called, v. 8,) or corpse of the former living witnesses; over which the Popish party did triumph: for they looked upon them as standing trophies of their victory, and therefore, did not think fit to kill them further, or bury them out of their sight. For it is said, (v. 7, 8,) that after they had finished their testimony, the beast did make war upon them, &c., he killed them and their corpse also, (for the additional words in our version, *shall lie*, are not the original, and do not mar the sense,) or their bodies, for some readings have it in the street of the great city, *i. e.*, in Bohemia, one street of the Papal dominions, or the great city of Rome, in a large sense. For I find that towards the end of the fifteenth century, the witnesses were in a manner wholly extinct. For Comenius* tells us, that about the year 1467, the Waldenses in Austria and Moravia had complied so far as to dissemble their religion, and turn to Popery in profession and outward compliance. The Taborites,† in the mean time, upon their refusing to do so, were so destroyed, that it was much that seventy of them could get together, to consult about continuing their church, and about finding out some qualified person to be their minister, for they had none left, A. D. 1467. And so low was the Church of Christ then, that when the hidden remains of the Taborites, (who were called Speculani, from their lurking in dens and caves,) sent out four men (as the same author relates in another book)‡ to travel, one through Greece and the East, another to Russia and the North, a third to Thrace, Bulgaria, and the neighbouring places, and a fourth to Asia, Palestine and Egypt: they did all, indeed, safely return to their brethren, but with sorrowful news, that they found no church of Christ that was pure, or free from the grossest errors, superstition and idolatry. This was in the year 1497. And when they sent two of their number two years afterwards, viz. Luke Prague and Thomas German, to go into Italy, France, and other places, to see if there were any of the old Waldenses left alive; they returned with

* Hist. Pers. Eccl. Bohem. ch. 20. Sect. 4, 5, pages 70, 71.

† Ibid. ch. 20. Sect. 3.

‡ Commenius in his short History of the Bohemian church, prefixed to his Exhortation to the church of England, Sect. 66, page 40.

the same melancholy news as the former had done, that they could neither find nor hear of any remaining: only they were informed of the martyrdom of Savanarolla, (who suffered in the year 1498,) and they were told of some few remains of the Piedmontese, that were hid and scattered among the Alps, but nobody knew where. Now, a few years after this, even the few remains of the Taborites were found out and persecuted, hardly any escaping: so that A. D. 1510, six suffered together publicly, and the year following, that famous martyr Andreas Paliwka, who, I think, was the last of that period. From whose death, in the end of the year 1511, or beginning of 1512, to the dawning of the Reformation by the first preaching of Carolastadius and Zuinglius, (who appeared at least a year before Luther as Hottinger* and others tell us,) there was only about three years and a half, which answers as near as can be, to the three days and a half of the unburied state of the witnesses. So that the spirit's entering into the witnesses, (v. 11,) began with the year 1516, if not the year before, though this appeared most remarkably when Luther opposed the pope publicly, A. D. 1517. There were not only enlightened, but (to explain the words of John, v. 11, a little further) they rose up upon their feet, A. D. 1520, when so many princes and free cities in Germany protested against the edict of Worms and Spire, and so got the name of Protestants. They heard a voice from Heaven saying, (v. 12,) ascend hither, *i. e.*, to power and peace; when Maurice of Saxony beat the Emperor Charles, A. D. 1552. And accordingly they did after that ascend to the heaven of honour, rest, and security, as if they had been wafted up by a cloud, and that in the sight even of their enemies; when the Protestant religion was established and legally settled and allowed of, in the year 1555, which was continued and confirmed by Maximilian and Rudolph afterwards; in whose days the church began to be settled in several other countries, viz. in England, Scotland, Denmark, Swedeland, Switzerland, and the Low Countries. Now, it is observable that in this period of time, when the witnesses finished their testimony, or were about to do so, the Turks took Constantinople, A. D. 1453; which I take to be designed by the earthquake that destroyed the tenth part of the Roman dominions, (v. 13;) for the Grecian empire was reduced before that, from being the third part of that empire, to be the tenth part only. So that Mahomet's prevailing over the Greek church, and the pope's conquest over the Western Christians, was much about a time, and therefore, said to be in the same hour or period of time, *i. e.*, before the sixth trumpet ended, and before the seventh began: for the sixth trumpet is the hour of the Turkish wo. And, indeed, their triumph was much of the same kind also. For as the papists triumphed only over the dead bodies of the witnesses, *i. e.*, over the Calixtines, (who were no longer living witnesses, the Taborites being all gone, and having overcome their enemies by their blood, and the word of their testimony,) so the Turkish triumph was only over seven thousand names of men, *i. e.*, over the remaining Eastern Christians, who were so degenerated in all respects, that they were only names or shadows of true Christians. Only, whereas, the Grecians did yet own themselves to be the same in profession with their ancestors, and so where the same with them as to name, the Calixtines were even debarred that privilege.

These things being, therefore, considered, (which I could easily enlarge upon, were I not confined at this time,) I think it is abundantly plain, that the great slaughter of the witnesses must have been precisely at the time I have mentioned. For it could not be till antichrist was at his highest pitch of power and grandeur, which was not before this time. And it was not possible that it should be after the seventh trumpet sounded, and the vials began to be poured out: seeing the witnesses were not only risen then, but were the instruments of this last and greatest wo to the worshippers of the beast, and therefore, we find (chap. xi. v. 14, 15, &c.,) that as soon as the witnesses arose, the second wo ended, and the third commenced in the begun exaltation of the saints and servants of God. And it is to me altogether inconceivable, that the witnesses should be risen and the antichristian interest decline; and yet that the witnesses should be entirely cut off during such a period. So that I am almost bold, on this head, (though I am resolved to propose my apocalyptical thoughts only by way of probable conjecture) to affirm that it is impossible, morally speaking, that the witnesses can ever be entirely slain, as they have been before, whatever particular and provincial persecutions they may be under for a time, and whatever formidable appearances there may be against the Protestant interest every where.

Against this assertion I can forsee no objection of moment, excepting one; and this is, that seeing the witnesses are said to prophesy all the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the beast's reign in sackcloth, and to be slain only when they have finished their testimony, (v. 6, 7,) it seems, therefore, very strange to say that they shall be slain during the time of their one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years prophecy, and so long before the end of them. To which I answer, that in the third verse there are two things spoken of, with respect to the opposers of Antichrist. The first is, that they are called witnesses or martyrs, against the abomination of that enemy. And the second is, that they are said to preach or prophesy against that interest. Now it is only in the second sense that they are spoken of in relation to the whole one thousand

* Hist. Reform. vol. i.

two hundred and sixty days. So that, though the witness bearing of the saints continue, in a large and general sense, for one thousand two hundred and sixty years (and that for the most part in sackcloth, because of the constant troubles they meet with from that restless enemy,) yet their witness bearing by martyrdom and sufferings, in a strict and proper sense, relates only to the time of their low and obscure state during the rage of the papists, before the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Now, it is not said, (though perhaps this was never taken notice of before) that the witnesses were killed after their whole prophecy or preaching was over, or after the one thousand two hundred and sixty days were run out; but only that after their testimony for Christ by suffering was over, that then, I say, they were universally slain and cut off, (v. 7.) Now, though there have been many persecutions since the Reformation, and the sounding of the seventh trumpet, yet they were never universal ones. Besides that the difference is great between the witnesses before and since that time, in this respect: for since Luther's appearing, our religion has been established publicly in several nations, and authorised by law, in opposition to popery, which it never was before. But to proceed,

The seventh trumpet sounds, (chap. xi. 14, &c.,) immediately upon the end of the sixth, *i. e.*, upon the rising of the witnesses. Now, as the xiii., and xiv. chapters are but further representations of the state of affairs under the sixth trumpets preceding, relating to the condition both of the church and antichristion party: so the xv., and xvi. chapters are preliminary to the period of the seven vials being poured out upon the papacy and its dominions. Of which visions I have a great many things to say; but I must curb myself now, lest I prove too tedious; I shall, therefore, only put you in mind of what I hinted before, that the seventh trumpet comprehend the seven vials: for these are but the parts of it, which gradually destroy the papal interest, which had increased under the former trumpets. As, therefore, this period brings in reformation, and, by various steps, makes the kingdoms of the world (which before were under Antichrist) to change so far and so wonderfully, as to become the kingdoms of God and Christ, (chap. xi. 14, &c.) So after a general but glorious account of the state of the church from the Reformation, (chap. xiv.) and a general account of the vials to be poured out on the popish party, during the some period, (chap. xv.,) we have a distinct account of the pouring out of these seven vials, (chap. xvi.,) in obedience to the great voice out of the temple, (v. 1,) which is but a repetition of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (chap. xi. 14,) under a new representation of it.

The third and last Septenary, therefore, is that of the vials, or last plagues and judgments upon Rome papal; which as far as I can, I shall explain by a distinct account of such of them as I reckon to be fulfilled, and by some few conjectures upon the remaining ones.

But, before I proceed to the particular consideration of these, there are two things which I would premise. The first is, that as the trumpets did raise Antichrist up, and the vials must pull him down: so there is a wonderful relation that the last bear to the former, especially the four first ones; for the first trumpet and first vial bring judgments on the earth, the second trumpet and vial on the sea, the third trumpet and vial on the rivers, and the fourth trumpet and vial on the sun. The second is this: that seeing the vials do suppose a struggle and war between the papish and reformed parties, every vial is to be looked upon as the event and conclusion of some new periodical attack of that first party upon this other; the issue of which proves at length favourable to the latter against the former; which, seeing it is the most noble and remarkable part of the period that the vial relates to, is therefore, that which denominates the period itself; even as the conquest of Pompey by Cæsar, and of Anthony by Augustus, suppose their wars before, and give the denomination to their governments. These things being premised, I now proceed.

The first vial which fell upon the earth, to the tormenting of the subjects of the beast, (chap. xvi. 2,) doth denote God's judgments upon the foundation of the papal power; the earth being that on which we walk and build our houses, and out of whose womb we are maintained. So that by this I understand the popish clergy, and the papal dominions and revenues, as they are upheld by them. This, therefore, began with the Reformation, and continued until the time that the popish factors and trumpery were thrown out of as many countries of Europe as embraced the Reformation. And we may easily conceive what a mortification this was to that party, when the pretended sanctity of their priests, monks, and nuns, was found to be mere cheat, and their miracles nothing else but lies or legerdemain; and when their tales of purgatory were exposed to public contempt, and their pardons and indulgences would sell no longer; and consequently when the pope, and his red-hatted and mitred officers saw themselves driven out of so great part of their dominions, their seminaries for breeding their motley soldiers of all denominations and orders pulled down, and so much of their yearly revenues lost. Whence they are said to fall under a noisome and grievous ulcer or sore; being this way pained and vexed inwardly, and rendered contemptible to the whole world, that looked upon them as no better than vermin, and the plagues of mankind. So that this vial began with the rise of Zuinglius and Luther, and the other reformers, in the year 1516, and 1517, and continued to the year 1566, *i. e.*, about forty

years; for against that time all the reformed churches were settled, and published their creeds and confessions against Rome, in opposition to the determinations of the popish council of Trent, published A. D. 1563, and the creed of Pope Pius the Fourth, which added twelve antichristian articles to the twelve primitive Christian ones, which was put out, A. D. 1564.

The second vial, (ver. 3,) must, therefore, begin where the other ended, as to the period of time that commences from thence. Now I find, that, in the year 1566, the wars between the king of Spain and the States of the Netherlands began, when the latter got the nickname of *Geuse*. And though the Spaniards were often victorious at first, yet they were at length forced to declare them free states. It was then that the sea became blood to the Romanists, their votaries being miserably defeated in their expectations: for, after their cruelties under the duke of Alva, in the Low Countries, and their massacres of the Protestants in France, and other places, the scene was changed very quickly: so that A. D. 1588, the Spaniards lost their vast Armada, and did ever after decline in their power. And the duke of Guise, the inveterate enemy of the Protestants, was killed the same year: and, A. D. 1598, died Philip the Second of Spain, being eaten up of lice: the edict of Nants being giving out the same year in France in favour of the Protestants. So that as the reformed interest was in peace every where, and conquered in Holland and England, the popish party on the other hand saw Spain, the late terror of the Protestants, brought to a languishing condition, and all their allies weary of wars and persecutions. And as in the year 1609, the truce was made between the Spaniards and the Dutch, so the war, though renewed and carried on afterwards, became languid and faint, so as hardly to be felt or minded by either party, especially the Dutch, who were for the most part victorious and successful. So that, as the period of this vial began A. D, 1566, so we may reckon it continued about fifty years, viz. to the year 1617; seeing we shall find that the third vial did begin then. For,

The third vial, (v. 4, 5, 6, 7,) was poured out upon the rivers and fountains of water, or those territories of the papacy which were as necessary to it as rivers and fountains are to a country, being, as it were, the former vial continued, as to the kind of the plague: for as the former destroyed the living creatures or living souls that were in or upon the sea, viz. the Spaniards, the great mariners of the world at that time, as to their marine power; who after the year 1588, lost their former sovereignty of the seas, to the English and Dutch; so this latter plague makes it difficult for the popish to subsist and keep their ground, even in the inland country, and several dominions of Germany, and the neighbouring places: for, in the year 1617, Ferdinand being forced upon the Bohemians as by the Emperor Matthias, and crowned king; the foundation of new quarrels was laid this way: for, a little while after, another most bloody religious war ensued, which shook all the empire, and frightened Europe. And though the Protestants lost Bohemia, the Palatinate in part, and were driven out of Moravia, Austria, and Silesia, at this time, and were not only persecuted in many places, but like to be extirpated and rooted out universally, yet the tide turned all on a sudden: for after the emperor had ruled Germany with a veteran army for a considerable time, Gustavus Adolphus enters Germany in the year 1630, and conquers every where. And though he was killed about two years after, yet his army continued victorious, until at length all things were accommodated at the peace of Munster, A. D. 1648, with which, therefore, the period of the third vial must be supposed to end, which consists of thirty-one years. Now, as this began with persecutions against, and cruelties upon the Protestants, so at length the angel of the waters is heard to give thanks for making the papist drink of their own blood at last. Which song of praise another angel falls in with, and says amen to. All which seems to denote the joy both of the Protestant state and church upon the success of the Swedish arms against the emperor.

The fourth vial comes now to be considered. And as this is poured out upon the sun of the papal kingdom, (v. 8;) so the effect of it is men's being scorched or burned with fire, which yet does not make them turn to God, but blaspheme his name the more, as we may see, (v. 9.) Now as this vial must begin where the other ends, viz. at or a little after the year 1648; so I cannot see but it must denote the wars that followed the peace of Munster, with other incidental occurrences. Now we find that the French hostilities and wars in Flanders began about this time. And though this fire seemed to be quenched by the Pyrenean peace, about ten years after that of Munster; yet this proved rather fuel to the flame, which broke out with more violence than before, by the seizure of Lorrain, the new conquests of the French in Burgundy and Flanders, and the wars upon Germany, and invasion on the Low Countries. To which we may add the French king's quarrels with several popes, about the restitution of Castro, the rights of the duke of Modena, the affair of Corsi, and about the regale and the franchises. Now seeing the bombarding of towns and cities was chiefly made use of in these later wars, we may see how properly the scorching or burning men from above (as if the sun had sent down fire and heat from his own body) is made use of to characterize the time of this vial. But the chief thing to be taken notice of here, is, that the sun and other luminaries of heaven,

are the emblem of princes and kingdoms, as we took notice before. Therefore, the pouring out of this vial on the sun must denote the humiliation of some eminent potentates of the Romish interest, whose influences and countenances cherish and support the papal cause. And these therefore must be principally understood of the houses of Austria and Bourbon, though not exclusively of other popish princes. Now it is not unusual with God to make his enemies crush and weaken one another. And thus I suppose this vial is to be understood, when it is said, that upon pouring of it out on the sun, power was giving to him, *i. e.* the sun (as most understand the words from the connection) to scorch men with fire. And this is plain in what of the vial is fulfilled, and will be perhaps more so afterwards. As therefore France was made use of, in the instance given, to vex and scorch the Austrian family, in both branches of it; so afterwards was he himself tormented, when he saw himself forced to leave Holland, which he was so near surprising, A. D. 1672; and especially when he was forced to resign all his conquests in Flanders, by the late peace of Ryswick. It is true, he seems to have now more glory than ever, by the accession of his grandson to the Spanish monarchy; but then this is by an eclipse upon the Austrian family, which is expired in the first branch of it. And who knows but this advancement may lay the foundation of the ruin or decay of the French power, by exhausting that kingdom, both as to men and money, in defence of a weak monarchy? In the mean time, we see this vial has already taken place, in darkening the glory of King James, (whom the papists expected new conquests from) by the hand of King William; by whom also God put a stop to the career of the French monarch in his conquests in Flanders, and on the Rhine. And we see it farther poured out, in the eclipse of the Austrian family, by the loss of Spain and its dependent principalities, as also in defeating the wicked designs of the three confederate monarchs, of Poland, Denmark, and Russia.

And now, seeing I have marked out the time we are in at present, it is time also to put a stop to our apocalyptical thoughts, seeing no man can pretend upon any just grounds, to calculate future times. However, seeing I have come so far, I shall adventure to present you farther with some conjectural thoughts on this head, for I am far from the presumption of some men, to give them any higher character.

Now, my conjectures shall relate to two things, viz. to the remaining part of this vial, and to the other vials that follow this.

And first, as to the remaining part of this vial, I do humbly suppose that it will come to its highest pitch about A. D. 1717, and that it will run out about the year 1794. The reasons for the first conjecture are two. The first is, because I find that the papal kingdom got a considerable accession to its power, upon the Roman Western empire's being destroyed, A. D. 475, to which the Heruli succeeded the year following, and the Ostrogoths afterward. Now if from this remarkable year we begin the calculation of the twelve hundred years, they lead us down to A. D. 1735, which in prophetical account is this very year 1717. The second is, because (as I have many years ago observed,) this year leads us down to a new centenary revolution: for is it not observable that John Huss and Jerome of Prague, (to run this up farther,) were burnt A. D. 1417? After which the true religion in Bohemia, and in other places, was more and more obscured and suppressed, until that famous year 1517, when Luther arose, and gave the Reformation a new resurrection: according to that remarkable prediction of Jerome of Prague, *Centum annis revolutis Deo respondebitis et mihi;* which the Bohemians afterwards stamped upon their coin as their motto. From which year the reformed interest did still increase, (whatever particular stops and troubles it met with,) till the year 1617; about which time the German and Bohemian wars began to break out. And it is but too obvious, what an ebb hath followed since that time to this, notwithstanding the pouring out of the second, third, and fourth vials. So that there is ground to hope, that about the beginning of another such century, things may again alter for the better: for I cannot but hope that some new mortification of the *chief supporters of Antichrist will then happen; and perhaps, the French monarchy may begin to be considerably humbled about that time: that, whereas, the present French king takes the sun for his emblem, and this for his motto:* Nec pluribus impar, *he may at length, or rather his successors, and the monarchy itself (at least before the year* 1794,*) be forced to acknowledge, that (in respect to the neighbouring potentates he) is even* singulis impar.

But as to the expiration of this vial, I do fear it will not be until the year 1794. The reason of which conjecture is this; that I find the pope got a new foundation of exaltation, when Justinian, upon his conquest of Italy, left it in a great measure to the pope's management, being willing to eclipse his own authority, to advance that of this haughty prelate. Now this being in the year 552; this, by the addition of the sixteen hundred and twenty years, reaches down to the year 1811; which according to the prophetical account, is the year 1794. And then I do suppose the fourth vial will end, and the fifth commence, by a new mortification of the papacy, after this vial has lasted one hundred and forty-eight years: which indeed is long, in comparison with the former vials; but if it be considered in relation to the fourth, fifth, and sixth trumpets, it is but short, seeing the fourth lasted one hundred and ninety years, the fifth, three

hundred and two, and the sixth, three hundred and ninety-three.

And now, my friends, I may be well excused, if I venture no further, in giving you any more conjectural thoughts upon this present period of time. But seeing I pretend to give my speculations, of what is future, no higher character than guesses, I shall still venture to add something to what I have already said. Therefore be pleased, first to call to mind, what I premised to the consideration of the seven vials, as the second preliminary, viz., that seeing the vials do (all of them,) suppose a struggle or war between the popish or reformed parties; every vial is to be looked upon, as the event and conclusion of some new periodical attack of that first party upon this other; the issue of which proves at length favourable to the latter against the former. For if this be duly considered, it will let us see, that great declining of the Protestant interest for some time, and great and formidable advances, and new degrees of increase in the Romish party, are very consistent with the state of both these opposite interests under the vials. For, as Rome pagan was gradually ruined under the seals, under many of which it seemed to increase to outward observation, and to become more rampant than before, when yet it was indeed declining; so must we suppose it will be with Rome papal. For monarchies, as they rise gradually and insensibly, so do they wear out so likewise. And, therefore, we must not entertain such chimerical notions of the fall of the papacy, as if it were to be accomplished speedily or miraculously, as many have done. For as it rose insensibly, and step by step, so must it fall in like manner.

But to illustrate this farther, as to what of the vials is yet unfulfilled, by what is past; let us look back on the two preceding vials. The second vial therefore began with a formidable attack upon the Protestants by the growth of the Austrian family, from the year 1566 to the year 1588; during all which time the vial seemed rather to be poured out on the Protestants than papists. But as there must be a war, to denote a victory, so it was in this case. So that the vial was seen at last in its effects upon the Austrian party from A. D. 1588 to 1598, and afterwards to 1617. For it is with the church as it is with the particular Christians, who are often sorely buffetted by Satan, and sometimes brought even to extremities by temptations, but do ever carry the victory at last. Who would have believed that the Christian church was about to triumph over the Roman pagan empire, and when the dreadful persecution under Diocletian and his collegiate emperors was at its highest pitch? but the darkest time of the night ushers in the dawning of the church's day, in the usual way of God's providence over the same, and this is very conspicuously to be observed in the period of the third vial. Who would have thought that the loss of Bohemia, and the Emperor Ferdinand ruling all Germany with a formidable army, were like to issue in the victories of the Swedish arms, and the future security of the Protestant interest through the empire and elsewhere? So that we must not wonder, if for sixteen years the house of Bourbon be raised up to be a farther terror and scourge to the world, and to Protestant nations particularly. And, as a confirmation of this conjecture, let it be considered in the second place, (besides what I hinted before on this head,) that it is something very extraordinary and peculiar in some sense to this vial, that the sun, upon which it is poured out, should yet be made the executor of the judgment of it on others, at the same time that he is tormented with it himself. So that whosoever is denoted by the sun here (as I suppose the house of Bourbon principally is) is made use of, as the devil is, both to torment others, and to be tormented himself in so doing. And if the king of France therefore, be denoted by this principally, I fear yet he is to be made use of, in the hand of God, as Nebuchadnezzar was of old against the Jews, viz. as a farther severe scourge to the Protestant churches every where. And, besides this characteristic mark, which seems to forbode his farther exaltation and our humiliation; there is yet a third thing, that I cannot but think upon with dread and trembling of heart, viz. that it is farther said, that while this sun of the popish world is running his fatal and dreadful career, and scorching men with fire, they are so far from being bettered by these judgments, that they go on more and more to blaspheme the name of God, who has power over these plagues. And while this continues to be the state of the Protestant world, and while atheism, deism, socinianism, irreligion, profaneness, scepticism, formality, hatred of godliness, and a bitter persecuting spirit, continue and increase among us; what can we expect but new and desolating judgments? For, while we continue to walk thus contrary to God, we cannot but expect that he should walk contrary to us also. It is in vain for us to boast of our privileges, or plead exemption from judgments on this account. For where there is no national reformation and repentance, national sins are likely to pull down miseries upon us, so much the sooner and more certainly, that we have been so singularly and peculiarly privileged. For we may in this case expect that God will say to us, as to the Israelites of old, (Amos iii. 2,) "You have I specially known and chosen above all the families or nations of the earth, therefore, will I punish you more certainly and more severely than any other kingdom or nation." And therefore, if we go on in sin, as we have hitherto done, let us take heed to ourselves, lest vengeance be near. I pray God I may be mistaken in my fears; but I am afraid I have but too just reason to turn prophet here, by applying to ourselves what Peter said to those of his time: "The time is come, that judgment must begin at the

house of God." Though I do also conclude with him, that if it begin at us, dreadful will be the end of our enemies at last. "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear? Wherefore, if we be called to suffer for our holy religion, let us do so according to the will of God, committing the keeping of our souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator." (1 Pet. iv. 17, &c.) And I wish my conjecture be not found to be more than a mere guess, that for about sixteen years our Romish enemies may prevail more and more. Though how far these may be lengthened out or shortened, we can only conjecturally judge of, from the future carriage of the reformed churches, under the circumstances they may be stated afterwards.

If any say, that these are melancholy conjectures, I must tell them that I cannot help the matter; for I must follow the thread of the text and the aspect of the times. If they ask, but when will the tide turn for the Protestant church? I answer, when they turn more universally to God, and no sooner. But if they inquire farther, whether the sun of the popish kingdom is not to be eclipsed himself at length? I must positively assert, he will; else this vial were not a judgment upon him, and the Romish party. But if yet again the question be, when this is to fall out, and how? I must tell you, that I have nothing farther to add to what I have said, as to the time. But as to the manner, how this is to be done, our text does lay a foundation of some more distinct thoughts. Therefore, in the fourth and last place, we may justly suppose, that the French monarchy, after it has scorched others, will itself consume by doing so; its fire, and that which is the fuel that maintains it, wasting insensibly; till it be exhausted at last towards the end of this century, as the Spanish monarchy did before, towards the end of the sixteenth age. And if we do now heartily and unanimously enter upon a war against France, with the assistance of allies, and be but vigorous and faithful in the prosecution of it, securing the source of money and treasure in the heart of America, and bringing the war into the bowels of a nation, where a young monarch is hardly established: I say, if we do this, without losing our opportunities, our peace and security may yet be lengthened out. Whereas, if we suffer ourselves to be lulled asleep at this time, we may have cause to lament our not having improved our season. But seeing I am not called to give my advice one way or other, I shall leave the determination of such weighty matters to the wisdom of national councils. However, as my duty is to pray for direction unto these, so I earnestly wish there may be nothing to stop the regular and secure procedure of public matters in this critical juncture, upon the wise improvement of which our future stability and peace does so much depend. And now, after all this, I desire ye may consult a book I formerly published, called "The Rod or the Sword, or the Present Dilemma of these Nations." For ye will there see more fully my thoughts of our times, and how the moral reasons given there, taken from the aspect of our age, though preached in 1692, and published the year following, do exactly agree with my present apocalyptical thoughts.

One thing only I shall further take notice of here, upon the occasion of the king of Spain's death; that God seems to mark out great things sometimes by very minute ones, such as names, E. G. as the Spanish monarchy began with Charles the Fifth, (as to the Austrian family,) so it has now expired in one of the same name: which I the rather observe, because of many instances of the same kind, of which number take these following: Darius the Mede, as Daniel calls him (though Xenophon calls him Cyaxares) the uncle of Cyrus, was the first Medo-Persian monarch, after the destruction of the Babylonian; and Darius Codomannus was the last. Ptolemeus Lagi began the Egyptian kingdom after Alexander's death, and Ptolemeus Dionysius was the last of that race. Augustus fixed the Roman empire, and it ended in Augustulus. The Eastern Roman empire was erected by Constantine the Great, and expired with Constantine Paleologus. The Scots' race came into England in a James, and has gone out again in another of that name. And whether William, the third king of England of that name, as well as the third William, prince of Orange, be likely to be the last both these ways, is left to future time to unriddle. Only I pray that God may long preserve him, and us by him, and may he live to be a further scourge to France, and a terror to Romanists.

But, second, to proceed with my other conjectures relating to the remaining vial: I do further suppose, that

The fifth vial, (v. 10, 11,) which is to be poured out on the seat of the beast, or the dominions that more immediately belong to, and depend upon the Roman see; that, I say, this judgment will probably begin about the year 1794, and expire about A. D. 1848; so that the duration of it, upon this supposition, will be the space of fifty-four years. For I do suppose, that seeing the pope received the title of supreme bishop, no sooner than A. D. 606, he cannot be supposed to have any vial poured upon his seat immediately (so as to ruin his authority so signally as this judgment must be supposed to do) until the year 1848, which is the date of the twelve hundred and sixty years in prophetical account, when they are reckoned from A. D. 606. But yet we are not to imagine that this vial will totally destroy the papacy (though it will exceedingly weaken it,) for we find this still in being and alive, when the next vial is poured out.

The sixth vial, (v. 12, &c.,) will be poured out upon the Mahometan Antichrist, as the

former on the papacy. And seeing the sixth trumpet brought the Turks from beyond Euphrates, from the crossing which river they date their rise; this sixth vial dries up their waves, and exhausts their power, as the means and way to prepare and dispose the Eastern kings and kingdoms to renounce their heathenish and Mahometan errors, in order to their receiving and embracing Christianity.

For I think this is the native import of the text, and not that the Jews are to be understood under this denomination of the kings of the East; which is such an old straining of it to serve a turn, as I cannot admit of. Now seeing this vial is to destroy the Turks, we hear of three unclean spirits like frogs or toads, that were sent out by Satan and the remains of the polity and church of Rome, called the beast and the False Prophet, in order to insinuate upon the Eastern nations, upon their deserting Mahometanism, to fall into their idolatrous and spurious Christianity, rather than with the true reformed doctrine. And these messengers shall be so successful, as to draw these Eastern kings and their subjects, and with them the greatest part of mankind, to take part with them. So that by the assistance of these their agents and missionaries, they shall engage the whole world in some manner, to join with them in rooting out the saints. (And here in a parenthesis Christ gave a watch word to his servants, to be upon their guard in this hour of trial, v. 15.) But when the pope has got himself at the head of this vast army, and has brought them to the place of battle, called Armageddon, (*i. e.*, the place where there will be a most diabolical, cunning, and powerful conspiracy against Christ's follower's;) then immediately doth the seventh angel pour out his vial to their ruin and destruction.

The seventh vial, therefore, being poured out on the air, (ver. 17,) brings down thunder, lightning, hail, and storms; which together with a terrible earthquake, destroys all the antichristian nations, and particularly Rome or mystical Babylon. And as Christ concluded his sufferings on the cross with this voice, *It is finished;* so the church's sufferings are concluded with the voice out of the temple of heaven, and from the throne of God and Christ there, saying, *It is done.* And therefore, with this doth the blessed millennium of Christ's spiritual reign on earth begin; of which, and what may be supposed to follow, we took some notice above.

Now, seeing these two vials are, as it were, one continued, the first running into the second, and the second completing the first; the one giving us an account of the beast's preparations for warring against the saints, and the other showing the event of the whole: there is no need to give you any conjectures about the conclusion of the sixth vial, or the beginning of the last; only you may observe, that the first of these will ...bly take up most of the time between the year 1848, and the year 2000; because such long messages and intrigues (beside the time spent before in destroying the Turkish empire,) and preparations for so universal a war, must needs take up a great many years: whereas our blessed Lord seems to tell us, that the destruction of all those his enemies will be accomplished speedily, and in a little time, in comparison of the other vial. Supposing, then, that the Turkish monarchy should be totally destroyed between 1848 and 1900, we may justly assign seventy or eighty years longer to the end of the sixth seal, and but twenty or thirty at most to the last. Now how great and remarkable this last destruction of the papal Antichrist will be, we may guess by that representation of it, (chap. xiv. 19, 20,) where it is set forth under the emblem and character of the great winepress of the wrath of God (which can refer to nothing properly but the event of the seventh vial,) as I might show at large, had I time. Now this winepress is said to be trodden without the city (viz. of Jerusalem or the Church, seeing this is called the city, in Scripture style, as Rome is called the great city,) in Armageddon, (Rev. xvi. 16,) which may bear allusion to the Valley of Decision, (Joel iii. 2. 12. 14.) However, the greatness of this slaughter appears in this, that the blood is represented to flow in such a current as to reach even to the horses' bridles, viz. of the servants of God, employed in this execution; for without doubt this relates to what we have, (chap. xix. 14,) which I beseech you to compare with this place: for ye will find that a large account is given of the fall of Babylon, (chap. xviii,) and of the triumph of the church upon her final victory over this enemy, (chap. xix. 1, &c.) And among other things spoken of relating to the battle and victory obtained at Armageddon, ye have this account of the general and his victorious army, (v. 11, &c.) "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True,—and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses. And he treaded the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of God. And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to fight with him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast and the False Prophet were taken,—and both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. And now to return to the representation of this slaughter by the winepress of blood, (chap. xiv. 20,) it is further said of it, that it flowed to the height of the horses' bridles, for the space or extent of sixteen hundred furlongs. So that Armageddon seems to be

denoted here, in the extent of it, as the field of battle, which is now turned into a field of blood. Now what place can we imagine to be so properly meant by this as the territory of the See of Rome in Italy, which (as Mr. Joseph Mede, who first made this observation, says,) from the city of Rome to the farthermost mouth of the river Po and the marshes of Verona, is extended the space of two hundred Italian miles, that is, exactly sixteen hundred furlongs; the Italian mile consisting of eight furlongs. Now the Hebrew word Armageddon, or Harmageddon, may be justly derived from הרמה, which signifies both a malediction or anathema, and a destruction or slaughter, and גדון, or more fully גדודון, which signifies *an army*, or *their army*. So that both the anathemas darted against the saints by the Romanists, and their armies made use of against them (all which proceeded from Rome papal,) may be here alluded to, in the expiration of both their ecclesiastical and temporal interest. So that this conjecture upon the name does confirm that other of Mr. Mede, that the Stata Della, Chiesa, or the territory and possession of Italy belonging to the See of Rome, is the place called Armageddon, where the final destruction of antichristianism will be.

And now, my friends, I have fulfilled my promise to you, in giving you not only a resolution of the grand apocalyptical question, when the papacy began, and when we may suppose it will end; but some considerable improvement of it, with respect to the knowledge not only of times past, but that particular period we are now under, together with conjectures (and some of them, I am sure, new and uncommon,) about future time. By all which I hope I have given the world such a key to unlock all the chambers of the book of Revelation, as I hope, I may venture to say, if considered and used impartially, judiciously, and diligently) will be found to give some new light to us in our mental journey through the mazes and turnings, and dark passages thereof. And had I not been so confined, as ye may see I have been, I might have cleared a great many other dark things in this prophecy. But, seeing I could not neglect this opportunity of presenting these thoughts to the world, as a new year and new age's gift at once, I do therefore, hope ye will the more easily excuse what may seem dark or defective in this discourse, as considering how much I am straitened, not only as to the limits of paper that I must keep to, but of time also.

Now, seeing I have already given you a theoretical improvement of the question I have presented you with a resolution of, all that remains is to bring you from speculations and notions to practice; that your thoughts may be seasoned with a serious and deep sense of your duty and interest, that ye may get advantage both by the perusal of my preceding apocalyptical meditations, and the following discourses: that after ye have considered the duty of improving your time, (which, together with some other things I am now to treat of,) ye may make application to yourselves of what I have said concerning God's dwelling with men upon the earth, so as ye yourselves may become temples of the living God; seeing God hath (2 Cor. vi. 16,) promised this privilege to all true Christians, saying, "I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." And when ye have thus applied to yourselves the first of the following discourses, I hope ye will not reckon it lost time to consider what I have said as to the ministerial work, especially the application, as to that part of it at least which does immediately relate to you and all Christians, as well as ministers: that this way ye may learn to join in with Christ's ordinances for the future, with greater seriousness, and in order to farther good than perhaps any of us have yet attained to do. And when ye have improved this way also by the perusal of the second discourse, let me desire you to read the last concluding one, with serious meditation, in order to see the connection and design of the whole; for though it be short, yet it contains much in little, and may be of use to introduce your minds to some farther and more distinct apprehension of our holy religion, as it centers in Jesus Christ. And when ye have thus perused and considered both this and the following discourses, I am willing ye think as meanly of both me and them as ye please, upon condition that ye may this way value the Holy Scriptures more: for as my design, in all my performances of this kind, is to dig my materials from the fruitful and rich mines of this divine depositum and sacred treasure; so I have no other end than to lead you in there also, that ye may be more and more enriched with the saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. In order to do this, therefore,

Let me, in the second place, suggest something here, by way of a practical improvement of what I have said above, especially as to that part of our discourse which I was last upon, relating to the apocalyptical times and periods, with the transactions of the same, in as far as they concern us. And what I have to say here, I shall propose by way of observations, which may be of some use, I hope, both to regulate our thoughts and actions, while we live in this world, in relation to the concerns of the church of God.

The first observation is, That it may justly be looked upon as an eminent confirmation of the truth of Christianity, that so wonderful an account should be given of the transactions of the world, so long before they came to pass.

The verity of our holy religion is proved from two things principally, viz., miracles and prophecy; and both these arguments

have been excellently improved by learned men. But yet, as the first of these was perhaps, the principal and most convincing topic to those that lived in our Saviour's days, so I look upon the second to be the most considerable to those that live in after ages. Nay, we find that Christ himself did not lay the foundation of the belief of his mission on miracles alone, but seemed to build the faith of his disciples chiefly on the Old Testament prophecies; as he did to the two disciples going to Emaus, (Luke xxiv. 27, &c.) And I suppose it is too plain to need any proof, that the apostles did ever insist upon the prophecies of the Old Testament, more than either upon Christ's miracles or their own, in order thence to demonstrate that Christ was the Messiah: for, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, (Rev. xix. 10,) *i. e.*, (as I understand the words,) the spirit of prophecy is the great standing evidence and testimony of the divinity of Christ, and of the verity of his word. And therefore, (as the angel argues with John,) he only is to be worshipped who is truly God, and who inspires his servants with the gift of knowing things to come.

It has, therefore, been the work of learned men in all ages to prove that Christ was the true Messiah, and consequently that his institution of religion was truly divine; by showing how punctually the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in him. But I am much mistaken if an impartial considerer of the New Testament prophecies may not find some things that do almost as plainly characterise several later events, as the ancient prophecies did the former. And of this, let what I have said of the sixth and seventh seal, and fifth and sixth trumpet, and of the slaughter of the witnesses, be taken as instances. Or if this will not be allowed, let it be considered, that we see the full completion of the Old Testament prophecies relating to the erection of Christianity, whereas we see not the entire fulfilling of the apocalyptical ones. Therefore, we must make allowance for the different representation of the one and the other of these: for they only that shall live after the great battle of Armageddon is over, can see the exact fulfilling of this prophecy in the destruction of Antichrist, with the same advantage they see also the fulfilling of Daniel's visions with respect to the coming of Messiah and his death. We therefore, now, have no more advantage, as to time, in explaining and understanding this latter event, than the Jews had as to the first, who lived in the days of the Maccabees, while Daniel's weeks of years were running out. And I question if they then did understand the periods of time they were under, more clearly, if at all so distinctly, as we do the times that have passed over the Christian church, and that part of time we are now under. Therefore, I say we have great reason to thank God, that so much of this book is already made so clear to us, as to prove confirming thus far to our faith: for whatever differences have been among the most eminent interpreters of this book, as to particular calculations and accommodations of things; yet they have all of them agreed in the main foundations of the interpretation thereof, which I have built upon, (excepting Grotius and Hammond, whose hypothesis has had few followers, and will have fewer,) as Dr. Cressener has irrefragably proved in his book, entitled, A Demonstration of the First Principles of the Protestant Applications of the Apocalypse. So that there are two things almost equally strange to me, that the Jews should own the verity of the Old Testament, and particularly of Daniel's prophecy, and not see that the Messiah is come; and that the papists should believe the divinity of the New Testament, and particularly of the Revelation, and not see that their church is antichristian. But while I admire the wilful stupidity of both these parties, I cannot but admire also the wisdom of God in making use of both these in his providence to confirm to us the verity of Christianity, in prophesying both of the one and the other so long before, and in continuing them to this day as standing monuments of the divinity both of the Old and New Testaments. But, besides this, there is

A second observation, that may be of great use to us this way also, viz.: That this book represents to us, as in a small but exact map, the steadiness and exactness of Providence, and Christ's government of the world.

For here we see the various and seemingly confused events of Providence so exactly methodized, as to make up one uniform and noble piece; the seeming discords and jarring sounds of things, being so disposed by infinite wisdom, as to make up one perfect harmony. Here piety and wickedness, angels and devils, the church and Antichrist, act various and contrary parts: and yet Christ makes use of all for noble purposes, and carries all on for one great end.

And now, as in other respects, so in this, we may take notice of the perfection of the Holy Scripture; that what is wanting in history is made up in prophecy, which in some sense is history also: for if history, in the general notion of it, be an account or relation of the actions of men in the world, prophecy is no less a species of this than that to which the name is most commonly appropriated: for, as that is a relation of things past, prophecy is an account of things to come. Now as Daniel makes up the *hiatus* or defect of the history of the Old Testament, so the Revelation of John supplies that of the New, by leading us down from Christ's first to his second coming.

And here let me observe, that these two books give us the exact plan of a divine history, which never yet was given; the only essay towards something of this kind,

that I know of, having been given by a near and dear friend of mine.* For, though there have been many ecclesiastical as well as civil histories written, yet none of these run in the strain of Scripture history, where all matters of fact are related not so much in reference to men as in relation to God, and his providence in governing the world.

A third observation is this: That we may now, after what I have said, attain to a distinct view of what part of this prophecy is past, and what remains yet to be fulfilled.

Of this I shall say nothing directly at this time; seeing the preceding scheme I have given of the apocalyptical periods may, I humbly hope, afford you a sufficient thread to regulate and fix your thoughts and meditations in relation to this subject; only I shall hint some things to you, that are deducible from what I have already said this way.

Therefore, first, let me advise you not to suffer yourselves to be deluded with the specious or confident pretences of some men, when they go about to impose not only upon themselves, but upon the world, by their notions relating to the sudden coming of Christ to judge the world, or to the speedy destruction of the papacy. I love to expose no man's weakness, and I perfectly abhor the way that of late is become modish, to rip up and publish personal failings. And therefore, I shall neither trample upon the graves of the dead, nor affront the living: as remembering that we do all know in part, and prophesy in part only. But, without detracting from others, I do in faithfulness and love desire ye may not suffer yourselves to be imposed on by a vain imagination that the end of things is so near, as some, both of old and of late, have pretended to foresee; for, from the scheme I have given you, ye may easily see, that there are many and great events to fall out before the final fall of antichristianism, and more before the consummation of all things.

And, second, as I would not have you to suffer your *hope* to carry you too far, so neither your *fear;* for as the warm imagination of some men has represented to them the fall of Antichrist and the day of judgment so near, that these must happen in their times; so the melancholy and fear of others has so far wrought upon them, that they have fancied the great slaughter of the witnesses is yet to come. And of both these sorts of men this observation will be found generally to be true; that those, over whose reason fancy and imagination has the ascendant, (whether it be an airy or sprightly, or a dull and melancholy one,) have still limited great events to their own time, and most commonly to a very few years. But I am much mistaken if I have not proved that the universal slaughter of the witnesses is already past; though, at the same time, I do readily grant that there is just ground to fear that we are near some very trying judgments, of some years continuance. But I have said enough of this above, and therefore, shall add no more here.

But, third, seeing I have touched but slightly upon the *millennium*, or the thousand years' reign of the saints on earth; I shall desire you to think a little further on this, as the greatest event that is to happen before the end of the world.

I dare not, indeed, expatiate upon this vast subject; only I shall suggest a few things concerning it.

The first is, that this is to begin immediately after the total and final destruction of Rome papal, in or about the year 2000; and that, therefore, Christ himself will have the honour of destroying that formidable enemy, by a new and remarkable appearance of himself, as I said above. But, second, we must not imagine that this appearance of Christ will be a personal one, no more than his appearance in the destruction of the Jews by Vespasian and Titus was such; for the heavens must retain him, until the great and the last day of the consummation or restitution of all things. (Acts iii. 21.) Thirdly, Yet we must have a care of confounding this millenary peaceful state of the church with the day of judgment: seeing nothing is more plainly distinguished than these are in the 20th chapter of the Revelation, where it is told us, that after the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be again let loose, and men shall apostatize almost universally from Christ, and make war against the saints; and that, after the destruction of those enemies, the day of judgment shall commence. And therefore, fourthly, we are not to imagine that the millenary reign of the saints shall be free from all mixture of hypocrisy and wicked men, or from sin and trouble: seeing the sudden and general apostacy that follows that period is a demonstration that all were not Israel that feigned themselves to be of it, and wanted, therefore, only an opportunity to shake off the church's yoke. Nay, the expiration of that period shows, that long peace and prosperity must have corrupted the church itself; else it cannot be conceived to be consistent with the equity and goodness of God to suffer her enemies to go so near to the total extirpation of his own professing people.

These things I have hinted thus, because I have no time or room to insist upon them as the subject does require. But I do the more readily pass them now, because a late learned author* has materially considered them: wherein he has very much confirmed my apocalyptical thoughts, which

* My father, in his third part of the fulfilling of Scripture, called Scripture Truth Confirmed and Cleared, by some eminent appearances of God for his Church, under the New Testament.

* Dr. Whitby's Treatise of the Millennium, added to his Paraphrase and Comment on the Epistles.

several years ago I had entertained upon this head.

And the same author* has prevented my inquiry concerning the call of the Jews, and their national conversion to Christianity: for, as I took notice before, I could never fall in with the strained interpretation of Rev. xvi. v. 12, as if by the kings of the East the Jews were to be understood, and that consequently their full conversion was to be under the sixth vial. Therefore, after various thoughts upon this head, being satisfied that the Jews were to be converted, and this great event could not be wholly left out in the Revelation, I did at last conclude that this must not be (whatever particular conversions of some part of them might happen) until the final destruction of the popish party; whose idolatry, villainies, lies, and legends, and bloody temper, is the chief thing that prejudices them against Christianity. So that I did at length conclude, that the resurrection or revival of the ancient Jewish church is understood by the resurrection of the martyrs, (chap. xx. v. 4,) who, being thus added to the true reformed Christian church, and making up one body, together with those Gentile believers, in the fulness or ripened state of the Gentile church, shall be to them as life from the dead. (See Rom. xi. 15, 25.)

One notion only I crave leave to add to those of the above cited author on these heads, viz. that I look upon the millenary state to be the most eminent and illustrious time of the Christocraty, (I hope none will reject the word, though it be new, seeing it is so expressive of the thing,) wherein Christ will revive, but in a more spiritual and excellent way, the ancient theocraty of the Jews. For as under Moses, the judges and kings of Judah, God acted as king of the Jews, (or Christ rather in a more peculiar and immediate sense, as I may perhaps, afterwards have an occasion to prove to the world,) so I do expect, that after God has delivered his Christian church from spiritual Egypt, and destroyed his enemies of the Red Sea of their own blood, he will once more exert his power and authority, and our blessed Redeemer will reign as king of his people, not indeed, in such a pompous way as among the Jews of old, (for John saw no temple in the new Jerusalem,) (Rev. xxi. 22,) but in a a way adapted to the New Testament dispensation, and more immediately preparative unto, and typical of, the state of glory in heaven, after the day of judgment is over.

And now, that I am upon this great prophetical event, I cannot forbear to give you a new conjecture upon the last numbers of Daniel. For his seventy weeks of years, (chap. ix. 24,) are already remarkably elapsed in the incarnation and death of our Redeemer. And the number of two thousand days, (chap. viii.,) are plainly to be interpreted of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and his profanation of the sanctuary: for as it is restricted to that short period, as is plain to any that will attentively consider the words themselves, (v. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, especially if compared with v. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26,) so the Spirit of God, by designating this period by the title of νυχθημερον, or a period of evenings-mornings, *i. e.*, natural days, does plainly assure us that we are not to interpret these days prophetically for years, as we are allowed to do the seventy weeks and other numbers. To return, therefore, to the last numbers of Daniel; there are two distinct periods of time, as I take them to be, (though all other interpreters go another way,) to be found in his twelfth chapter. The first is of a time, times, and a half, or three years and a half, (v. 7,) *i. e.*, one thousand two hundred and ninety prophetical days or years, as Daniel himself has it explained to him. (v. 11.) This, therefore, is the same period of time that John borrows from Daniel, and accommodates to the duration of Rome papal, excepting that there is the difference of thirty days, or years, only that era of the period of Daniel is vastly different from that of John: for, as to the latter, we have seen it already; but, as to the former, Daniel fixes it at the scattering of the holy people, or the Jewish nation, (v. 7,) and at the taking away of the daily sacrifice, and of the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate. (v. 11.) Now our Saviour, who was the best expositor of his own word, explains this abomination that maketh desolate, and which was to pollute and ruin the sanctuary, to be nothing else but the idolatrous and desolating Roman army, as we see by comparing, Mat. xxiv. 15, with Luke xxi. 20, 21. The epoch, therefore, of the time, times, and a half in Daniel, or his one thousand two hundred and ninety years, must be the year seventy from the birth of our Saviour, when Jerusalem was taken, if we should consider the beginning of the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate. But seeing the era of this number is not the beginning of the conquest of the Jews, but the complete scattering of that nation, or the accomplishing the scattering of the power of the holy people, as the words are, (v. 7,) and full setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate, (v. 11,) which was not done till Hadrian's time, who fully conquered the Jews, and built a city near the ruins of Jerusalem, which he called Ælia, building at the same time a temple to Jupiter, on the ground where the temple had stood, and engraving over the gate of this new city the figure of a swine, in derision of the Jews. Now this work was finished in or about the year 135, from whence the period of one thousand two hundred and ninety years leads us down to A. D. 1425, which, in prophetical reckoning, is the year 1407, about which time the papal power was at its

* Dr. Whitby's Treatise, and on Rom. xi., and Appendix to the same.

utmost elevation. For after this time the Hussites, Albigenses, Wickliffites, Waldenses, Picards, &c., began to fall before the Romanists, until they were, in a manner, totally extirpated before another century had well nigh run out. Now, this dismal period expires about this time, and then there follows the second period of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days or years, (v. 12,) which being calculated from the year 1407, terminates A. D. 2742, *i. e.*, 2722 of prophetical reckoning, which, therefore, includes the begun downfall of the papacy under the seven vials, and the final accomplishment thereof afterwards, together with the greatest part of the millennium, and consequently the great conversion of the Jewish nation during that period; and perhaps, the begun apostacy of the Jewish and Gentile Christians (which is to issue in an universal war against the saints, upon the expiration of the millennium,) may begin about that year 2722.

And now, that I have come again upon prophetical numbers, I shall venture to digress a little more still, in giving you some further illustration of these two great periods, from the fourteenth chapter of the Revelations. Of which take these few hints at this time. In the first place then, ye have a description of Christ's followers adhering to him, during the reign and rage of Antichrist, from v. 1, to v. 5, inclusive: which must, therefore, reach down from A. D. 606, or 758 rather, to A. D. 1517. After which we have the begun revival of the church of Christ represented in the second place, by the testimonies of the three angels, succeeding one another. The first angel has a commission to preach the gospel purely to all nations, (v. 6, 7,) which must, therefore, begin with the preaching of Zuinglius and Luther; and does include, I humbly suppose, the periods of the four first vials. The second angel follows, (v. 8,) and proclaims the fall of Babylon, or the papacy; and must, therefore, be synchronical with the fifth vial, being poured out upon the seat of the beast. The third angel gives men warning, that they should not join with the beast, and denounces severe judgments against them that shall be found to do so, (v. 10, &c.,) which, therefore, relates to the last part of the time of the sixth vial, when the unclean spirits go forth to insinuate into the nations, in order to engage them to make war against the saints. (chap. xvi. v. 13, 14, 15, 16.) Now, after all these things, we have, in the third place, a typical or emblematical account of the deliverance of the church, and of the bloody persecuting antichristian party. Therefore, we have first, the emblem of a harvest, which seems immediately to relate to Christ's gathering his church into a happy state. (v. 14, 15, 16.) And then, second, we have the representation of the final destruction of the popish party, under the emblem of a vintage, wherein the bloody clusters of the several popish fraternities and communities are to be bruised and squeezed to death in the winepress of God's wrath. (v. 17, 20.) But I have spoken already to this great period of time above, which issues in the blessed millennium, and therefore, shall say no more to it at this time.

Only there is one thing that falls in my way here, which ought not to be passed over in silence; and that is, to what period we are to refer the happy state of the New Jerusalem, (chap. xxi.,) and of the blessed river and tree of life. (chap. xxii.) For I find interpreters at a mighty loss this way, whether these relate to the millennium or heaven itself, after the day of judgment is past. And indeed, there are some things that seem inconsistent with either of these states. For what is said of the nations flocking into this new state, and walking in the light of it, and of the kings of the earth that they shall bring in their glory and honour to the church, (chap. xxi. 24, 25, 26,) seems not to agree with the notion the Scripture gives us of the state of the glorified in the higher heaven, after the resurrection; but does exactly suit with the peaceful reign of the saints, when Jerusalem or the church shall be exalted above the nations, who shall all run into her. And yet, upon the other hand, there are things also, that seem to be too great even for the blessed millennium, as we have given the notion of it above. Such is the account of the perfection of this state, that it will be exempted from all death, sorrow, crying, and pain. (chap. xxi. 4.) And yet, as the former expressions may be adapted to the state of the church triumphant in heaven, in a spiritual sense, so these last expressions may be made to suit also the state of the church on earth, during the millennium in a comparative sense, *i. e.*, if considered with respect to the preceding afflicted condition of Christians.

Therefore, seeing this last glorious scene of affairs may be interpreted in relation either to the one or other of these periods, I conclude that we ought to interpret it of both, viz., of the millenium in a first sense, and of the future glory of the church in heaven, in a second and complete sense. For, as I have observed above, that the sacred prophecies, particularly that in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, are to be interpreted both in the first and second, or ultimate sense, so I do believe we must, of necessity, understand the account of the new heavens and new earth, and of the heavenly Jerusalem in this book. And if this be once supposed, then will it be easy to adjust the seemingly different figures used by the Holy Spirit, in this place: seeing the whole is so contrived, that it may correspond both with the millenary state and the future state of glory, viz. to the first, as an emblem and type of the latter. So that as the destruction of the Jewish nation and church is given in such words, (Mat. xx-

as to become this way an emblem of the final destruction of the world; so likewise is the millennium so painted and described, (Rev. xxi.,) as to be designedly given as a type of the state of the church triumphant in heaven, after the day of judgment is over.

The fourth observation from what I have said before, is this; that our reformers did not rashly, but upon just grounds, desert the church of Rome, as antichristian and apostatical.

For not to insist on prophetical indications of the Roman church being, indeed, the great Antichrist; there are four things that lay a just foundation for all honest men leaving that interest; viz., first, gross errors, such as purgatory, human merits, and works of supererogation, indulgencies, transubstantiation, &c.; secondly, horrid idolatry, in worshipping angels, saints, and canonized persons, together with images, statues, crucifixes, and consecrated wafer; thirdly, the pretended infallibility of the Roman see, in imposing upon men's consciences what they please, and debarring us from reading the Scriptures ourselves, or making use of our own reason in matters of religion; and fourthly, the dreadful tyranny of that party, seen and felt both in their inhuman cruelties, persecution, massacres, and diabolical barbarities used against all those that differ from them. For the proof of all which things, let Chamierus be consulted, together with *Heydegerus de Babylone magna, Turretinus de necessaria Secessione ab Ecclesia Romana;* and, besides innumerable others, Stillingfleet's late pieces against the Romanists; for my time allows me not now to enlarge upon any of these heads.

Only that I may not leave you without some specimen of popery, I shall copy out in English the twelve articles of the Romish faith, additional to the twelve Christian ones, which are contained in the Apostles' Creed, as to the sum and substance of them. These twelve additional articles are contained in the famous bull of Pope Pius the Fourth, dated at Rome in the year 1564, in the ides of November, and the fifth year of his pontificate, which is to be found at the end of the printed canons and decrees of the council of Trent; where, after an enumeration of the primitive articles, beginning with, *credo in unum Deum*, &c., I believe in one God, &c., he proceeds to charge all men that would be saved, to own and swear unto the following articles also; anathematizing all that do not so. These begin thus: *apostolicas et ecclesiasticas traditiones*, &c., which take in English thus;

1. I do also, *i. e.*, together with the articles of the Apostles' Creed, most firmly admit and embrace the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observations and institutions of the same, (*i. e.*, the Romish) church.

2. I do admit the sacred Scriptures in the same sense that the holy mother church doth; whose business it is to judge of the sense and interpretation of them; which I will receive and interpret according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

3. I do profess and believe that there are seven sacraments of the new law, truly and properly so called, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary to the salvation of mankind, though not all of them to every person. These are baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and marriage, which do all of them confer grace. And I do believe that of these, baptism, confirmation, and orders, may not be repeated without sacrilege. I do also receive and admit the received and approved rites of the Catholic (*i. e.*, Roman) church, in her solemn administration of the above said sacraments.

4. I do receive all and every thing that hath been defined and declared by the holy council of Trent concerning original sin and justification.

5. I do profess, that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is a conversion made of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which conversion the Catholic church calls transubstantiation.

6. I confess that under one kind only, whole and entire Christ, and a true sacrament, is taken and received.

7. I do firmly believe that there is a purgatory, and that the souls kept prisoners there, do receive help by the suffrages of the faithful.

8. I do likewise believe that the saints reigning with Christ, are to be worshiped and prayed unto, and that they do offer prayers unto God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.

9. I do most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, of the blessed Virgin the Mother of God, and of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration ought to be given to them.

10. I do affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is very beneficial to Christian people.

11. I do acknowledge the holy Catholic and apostolic Roman church, to be the mother and mistress of all churches; and I do promise and swear true obedience to the bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

12. I do undoubtedly, receive and profess all other things which have been delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and œcumenical councils, and especially by the holy synod of Trent; and all things contrary thereunto, and all heresies condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the

church, I do likewise condemn, reject, and anathematize.

Lo, here my friends, ye have a fair prospect of popery, without any misrepresentation, or so much as comment: for these are the words of the creed itself, which all papists are obliged to believe and profess, in order to salvation; and which all those who enter into religious orders do solemnly swear unto. And, therefore, it is plain that these things are not looked upon by the church of Rome, as disputable opinions, but as necessary articles of faith: and, therefore, let the author of the case of the Regale and Pontificate, see how he can make good the last concluding words of his book, which are these: *Concors Romanæ and Reformatæ Ecclesiæ Fides*, &c., (*i. e.*,) the faith of the Roman and Reformed church doth agree, or is the same, &c.: for if these things be so slight and trivial to him, that he can (as the popish Gallican church doth,) swallow and digest all except the eleventh article, he must pardon others if they continue in the faith of the Reformed church, as that which is opposite to the Roman creed, in so many momentous particulars.

Nay, let me add one thing farther here as a necessary consectary or reference from what I have said in relation to this consideration we are still upon; that as our reformers did justly separate from the Romish church, so we have just ground also, to continue separated from that antichristian party.

Let others, under pretence of a dread of what they call schism, run back into antichristian errors and heresies. Let them, if they are so disposed, forsake pure Christianity, that they may promote the priests' power, and adorn their altars with gold and jewels. And let them, in order to enslave men's consciences and bodies both, sound a retreat to Babylon again. We, I hope, know our duty better than to run the risk of damning our souls, by becoming renegadoes to that bloody and wicked party, against whose abominations so many thousands of our ancestors witnessed, under racks and torments, at the stake in Smithfield and elsewhere. They believed, that what they did and suffered was in obedience to the call of God, saying, Come out from the apostate Romash church, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. (Rev. xviii. 4, 5.) And God forbid that any temptation should bring any of us back again to that sink of all impurities and errors, after we have enjoyed the sunshine of the gospel, in its purity and power, so long. Therefore, seeing we know what interest we are to keep to, let us be faithful to it, by doing all we can for its security, establishment, and honour. And if God call us to suffer for it, let us act as the former heroes of the Reformation have done before us, that Christ may be glorified, and the church edified by us, whether it be by doing or suffering, by life or by death.

The fifth, and last observation that I shall propose to your thoughts, as the conclusion of all I have said, is this: that though we are not to live to see the great and final destruction of papacy, the blessed millennium, or Christ's last coming to judge the world: yet, seeing death is the equivalent of all these to us, if we be so happy as to get into paradise; we ought, therefore, accordingly to spend and improve our time, that we may partake of the future glory when we go hence.

I say, death is the equivalent of all these things to us, if we be so happy as to get into paradise. For then we shall get the conquest over all antichristian enemies, and be with Christ in a better state than any earthly millennium can be supposed to be, waiting until He come to judge the world, and till we appear also, with him in glory, having re-assumed our then glorious bodies.

Improve your time, therefore, and all the opportunities and advantages of it, with your utmost diligence and seriousness, as remembering that ye are dying and accountable creatures, and that your time is given you for this very end, that ye may prepare for a better world.

And now that we see the beginning, not only of a new year, but of a new age, I must give a farther vent to my zeal and concern for your souls' good upon this great and practical head, viz. the improvement of time, with respect to the upper world; that when I am gone I may, by what I have said, and am about to say, continue to speak still to those that shall survive me, and even (if this discourse last so long,) to succeeding generations also. And I suppose ye will the more readily bear with me in this, when ye remember with what unanimity and importunity ye desired me to print a sermon on this head, which I preached on new year's day 1699, from Psalm xc. 12; for seeing I was prevented in yielding to your desire then, I shall lay hold on this opportunity to make amends, in some measure at least, for that seeming neglect, by presenting you with some useful hints on this subject.

And here, as I begin to speak upon this head, the story of Xerxes, comes to my remembrance; who, when he saw his vast army of a thousand thousand men march by (with whom he expected to have swallowed up the poor Grecians,) is reported to have wept, upon this thought, that before a hundred years should run out, none of all that multitude would be alive; little imagining, that before the end of that very year, he was to see the destruction of almost all of them, and draw his last breath himself also. For methinks it is a serious and weighty thing to think, that before the end of this century, all those that now make a figure in the world will have finished their course, and be gathered into heaven or hell; new actors coming up on the stage in their

stead. And yet while I lengthen out my meditation to the end of a century, I find just reason to contract my thoughts, and suppose I see both you and all others that crowd our streets and places of worship, or fill remoter islands and continents, gradually dropping into an eternity, some this year, some the next, and so on.

But to proceed to the consideration of the subject in hand; I suppose I need not tell you what we are to understand by the improvement of time, seeing this is too plain to need any explication in a general sense. And neither can it be dark to Christians, in a spiritual sense; for it can denote nothing else, but such a rational and religious regulation of our time, disposal of our talents and opportunities, especially as we live under the advantages and means of the gospel, that we may ever be occupied in doing and getting good, so as to find favour in the sight of God, and attain afterwards to the happy enjoyment of him. For seeing, as the Apostle says, now is our accepted time and day of salvation, we ought to take heed to ourselves that we receive not the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. vi. 1, 2.) We ought to reckon, therefore, that this space of our life is given us, that we may be taken up in promoting the honour of God, and our own and other men's good, as being, in all these respects, in a state of trial. Let us, therefore, improve our time, by labouring to gain our own assent and consent fully to the terms of the gospel, by studying the word of God, more and more; by a close and impartial trial of ourselves: by frequent and fervent prayer; and by an universal and constant obedience to all God's laws and institutions. And let us argue ourselves into this as our duty, by considering how dearly our Lord Jesus has purchased our day of grace and opportunity of salvation: how many have been damned and lost forever, by their not improving this talent of time: how dreadful the condemnation of such will be, who choose darkness rather than light; how unreasonable it is, to be so careful of the body, and so regardless of the soul; how strange it is, that we should not do that for our eternal advantage, which worldlings do for a little temporal gain; and, lastly, how uncertain we are of the continuance of our time and season of grace.

And seeing, in order to improve time aright, we ought to lay hold of all the special seasons and peculiar opportunities which God puts into our hand for this end: these will deserve to be particularly considered by us. But since it is the work of prudence, that every man know and observe his own circumstances and providential occurrences, in order to a right improvement of them accordingly; all that I can do here is to hint at some generals this way. Therefore, first, let me advise you to make a right improvement of the circumstances of your outward lot in the world. Are you in a state of prosperity? then be thankful to your gracious Benefactor. Are ye honoured? improve this, that God may be honoured through you. Are ye in any place of power and authority? Lay yourselves out to advance the kingdom of God among men. Are ye rich? remember what Solomon says, that wisdom is good with an inheritance; and therefore, serve God with what he gives you. But if ye be in adversity, despond not: but remember, that as prosperity gives men greater advantages for doing good, adversity affords more seasons usually for getting good; for in the day of adversity we are more ready to think and consider, than in the time of prosperity, as Solomon says; for then is the time and season to consider the vanity and uncertainty of the world, to know ourselves better and God more, and to prepare more readily and thoroughly for another world. Second, improve your circumstances, in relation to company or retirement. If ye be hurried with company, labour to gain that by them, which may in some measure make up your loss of time. If ye can get no good from them, then study, if possible, to do them good, by insinuating what may tend to their advantage: and then ye can have no reason to reckon your time lost. But if ye enjoy the company of good and wise men, it is not to be believed what profit and advantage may be got by mutual discourses to edification, where men are communicative, and can bear with different apprehensions about things, without running into heats and quarrellings. But if we are shut out from company, we may justly look upon solitude and retirement as a happy opportunity of advantage and profit, if we do but know how to improve the same, by filling up such seasons with study, meditation, and prayer. Third, Improve the means and opportunities of grace and salvation; for the end of all that Christ has suffered and done for us, is, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us to himself a people zealous of good works. (Titus ii. 14.) Therefore, let us so hear the word preached, and so join with the prayers of the church, and so partake of the ordinances of Christ, particularly that of the Lord's Supper. That we may be built up a spiritual house, as lively stones concurring to the raising up of such an edifice; and that we may become also a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable by Jesus Christ to God. (1 Pet. ii. 5.) And, fourth, if at any time, or upon any occasion, ye find the Spirit of God to move your thoughts and affections more sensibly than usual, as the angel moved the waters of the pool, of old. O, my friends, neglect not such a fair gale and favourable opportunity, but improve this happy season, and strike the iron when hot and malleable. For how dreadful must it be to quench the Holy Spirit, and stifle the convictions, emotions, and influences thereof, especially such as are sensible and peculiar.

But seeing, to begin aright, is one great

mean to carry on any thing successfully, we ought to set about the improving of our time as early as we can, without any delay or procrastination in a matter of this weight and moment; for it is only our present time that we can reckon ours; for as our yesterdays are irrecoverable, so our to-morrows are but maybes and uncertainties. Therefore, we are always called to hear God's voice to-day, if we will do it at all; and therefore let us not delay, but make haste, to keep God's righteous and holy commandments.

Now if we would improve our time and life to advantage this way, let us be sure not to neglect the morning of time. And here, then, let me put you in mind of *four* mornings of time. The first is, the morning of your life, *i.e.*, the time of your youth, health, and strength. Such of you as have lost this season in whole or in part, pray double your dilligence in the improvement of what remains of your time. But such of you as are young, be advised to remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and act so as ye may afterwards look back upon your past days with satisfaction and pleasure. Second, The morning of every day is time to be peculiarly improved for God and your own good: for the doing so has a mighty influence upon us as to the right spending of the rest of the day. It is a season that is not only *amica musis*, a friend to study, as the old saying is, but that is favourable also *orationi et devotioni*, to prayer and devotion; for while our minds are fresh and undisturbed with the hurries of company and business, it is certainly the fittest time for duty as well as study. And therefore, the saints of old were careful not to neglect this season. Third, Improve the morning of every week carefully, viz. the Lord's day; for as we discharge our duty then, we may expect God's blessing through the week more or less: but if we refuse to give God what is his due on his own day, we must not think it strange if God withdraw from us on those days that he has allowed us to serve ourselves upon. And hence it is no wonder, if we find that true, which many have confessed with sorrow at the hour of death, that the profanation of the Lord's day has been the inlet to all their after sins and miseries both. And, fourth, Perhaps, it may not be unprofitable for us to set apart the morning of every year, to review what we have done, and what has happened to us, the year past, and to beg God's blessing through the year following, It has been the practice of some holy persons to do this: some reckoning the year, as it is usual with us in our computations, from the first day of January; and others reckoning it from the day of their birth, or baptism, or conversion; in all of which every one may take which way pleases him best. And now, that we enter upon the morning or beginning of a new century; let me beseech you to begin this work now, if ye have neglected it during the years of the last age, which ye have run through, whether these have been more or fewer.

Having thus given you an account of time, and the opportunities and seasons of it to be improved; I shall proceed, to recommend this duty from three considerations, and then to direct you how to do it, by proposing three rules to be observed this way.

In the first place, therefore, let me earnestly recommend this duty to you from three weighty considerations.

The first consideration is this, that it is the duty and wisdom of every one of us, to be duly and deeply impressed with the sense and worth of the value of time.

I might take occasion here to show you, from innumerable examples, that the best and wisest men in all ages, both Christians and heathens, have been under the deepest and most constant impressions of the value of time. But as this would be too long for this place, so it is needless to insist upon it; seeing I believe you can as little form an idea of a wise or good man, that does not value or improve time, as I can.

Therefore, I suppose there is no need to prove to you the worth and preciousness of time; to you, I say, who know the uncertainty of it, and yet how much depends upon the improvement and loss of it. But if any of you need any awakening this way, consider how valuable time will appear to a convinced sinner, when he lies upon a deathbed, who sees himself dropping into another world, and yet apprehends that his peace is not made with God. O, cries the poor wretch, that I had spent less of my time on the world and my lusts, and more of it in minding the good of my own soul! O that I had all those hours and days back again that I spent in taverns and bad company! O for a year, or a month, or a week, at least, of health and strength, to make my peace with God! And pray, my friends, were ye never sick, and under some such thoughts then? Were ye not sensible then of mispent time? Or did you never promise amendment and reformation, if God should recover you? Where is now the performance of your vows? O, if there be any that forget God, and neglect to do as they have promised and resolved, let them consider their duty and interest in time, lest God tear them in pieces when there is none to deliver them. Alas! my friends, what would those poor wretches give for one day, nay for one hour, who are now in the infernal prison? What would they give for one offer of a Saviour, who are now lamenting their slighting of the gospel, and their mispending their time and opportunities of salvation? Therefore do ye learn to value time more, and improve it better, before it be too late to retrieve lost opportunities. And this leads me to another consideration. Therefore,

The second consideration is, that it is our wisdom, not only to be impressed with the worth and value of time, but to be duly and deeply affected and influenced this way, so as to set about the improvement of it, as our greatest and most concerning duty and interest.

For it is not speculation but practice that we are to mind here; and therefore, if our apprehensions of the worth of time do not influence us to improve it, they will only tend to our greater condemnation. Therefore, that what I have said may so affect you, as to incite you to your duty this way; I shall not grudge a little pains in writing further on this head, in hope that ye will not be weary in reading what was written. Take it not amiss, therefore, if I address you with some seriousness and warmth of affection, and through you, all others that may cast their eyes upon these sheets.

My dear friends, some of you have lived twenty, some thirty, some forty, some fifty, some sixty, or more years in the world. Now, I beseech you to consider what ye have been doing all this time. Have your performances borne any proportion to the mercies ye have received from God? Have ye been faithful to improve your talents for your God and Saviour? Have your convictions brought forth a saving conversion? Have your resolutions and promises been all performed? Has it been a matter of conscience to you, to serve God with the best of your time, the greatest vigour of your thoughts, the utmost energy of love and delight, and in a word, with all your heart and strength?

If ye have been deficient this way, then pray consider, not only how impossible it is to bring back any part of the time that is past, but how little, or at least how uncertain the time is, that remains to be lived over. And if any be secure this way, because they are young, or strong, or healthful, let them remember how often the old carry the young to the grave, and the weak and sickly see robust and vigorous persons drop off before them. And what is our life at longest? Does not the Scripture labour, as it were, under a want of metaphors, to describe its vanity, when it compares it to a handbreadth, a span, a vapour, the grass that is soon mowed down, the flower that quickly fades, the shadow that declines, and the tale that is told? How poor a thing then is it, to be able no otherwise to number our days and years, than by our being born at such a time, and having lived to such another time? There is, therefore, no more unreasonable desire in the world, than to live long, where there is no concern to live well; for this is only to wish to have more time to mispend, to sin longer than others, and to be more miserable in the other world. Besides that, it is impossible, as the course of things is now, to live long in a proper sense; for, as the following distich ·sses it:

Vivere quisq ; diu quærit, bene vivere nemo :
At bene quisq; potest, vivere nemo diu.

That is:

To live long, all desire; to live well, none:
Yet all may live well, but none can live long.

For is it not for this very end that time is given us, that it may be improved and lived well, in order to our being fitted and prepared for the happy state of a glorious immortality? Surely God did never make so glorious a creature as man, endued with an immortal soul, merely to live the life of the beast, to eat, and drink, and sleep, or to enjoy his sensitive lusts and pleasures.

Think, then, my friends, that according as ye improve or misimprove time, ye are to be happy or miserable for an eternity: for we are now in a state of trial, and upon our behaviour, in order to be rewarded or punished afterwards, as we shall be found to have acted, when we come to be judged: therefore, we may rejoice now, and take our pleasure as we please. But we have reason to rejoice with trembling, when we remember, that we are to be called before God, and judged for all we do now: for they that live in the flesh, according to their lusts, must give an account to him, that is to be the Judge of the quick and the dead. And then every one of them will hear that dreadful word, Take the unprofitable servant, and cast him into the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Consider, therefore, that it is impossible to recall any moment of time that is lost in a proper and physical sense; and that thus it is a foolish and ridiculous wish; ***O mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos!*** O if God would give me back the years that are past! But yet, in a moral sense, we may be said to bring back past time, when by doubling our diligence, we do, in some sort, retrieve the misimprovement of former days. But then it must be remembered, that this must be done now or never; for if our time comes to an end here, there is no returning to a state of trial again, such as we now enjoy. If a man die, shall he live again? No, alas, says Job: for as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth to the grave shall come up no more, (i. e., to live on earth again, as the following words explain the meaning:) He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more. Therefore, let us all say with him (and improve the thought,) When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

Now, besides all these things, it may be of great use to enforce this consideration, to take a view of the complexion and genius of our age, or the time wherein we live: for if the Apostle Paul, when he exhorts his contemporary Christians to redeem the time, gives this as the reason of his advice—because the days are evil; I am sure we have much more reason to call the days wherein

we live by this name: for the sense of the apostle, when he calls the days wherein he lived evil days, is no doubt this chiefly, if not only, that they were afflictive and perilous times; for times of troubles are (Gen. xlvii. 9. Psalm lxxvii. 19. Amos v. 13, 18,) called evil times, or evil days, frequently in Scripture. But we may justly take this in a larger sense, in reference to our times; for an age or time may be denominated evil, either with respect to the abounding of errors, profaneness or calamities. And, upon all these accounts, these days of ours may be justly said to be evil; for, as to errors, how many and how gross are these? How many deny the Lord that bought them? How many oppose his divinity and satisfaction both? Yea, how many revile him as an impostor, and ridicule all revealed religion? Nay, how many dare blaspheme God, and deny his being, and even the first principles of natural religion? And, as to profaneness and immorality, where did we ever hear or read of more among Christians? Nay, it may be a question, if ever the heathens were worse than most Christians are now. And, again, as for calamities and troubles, we see what other churches have suffered of late, and do suffer still; and we see in how tottering a condition all the Protestant interest is; and though I believe it will prove a burdensome stone to the enemies of Christ, yet how far God may suffer them to prevail for a time, none of us know; only I am afraid we are upon the brink of very great troubles; and that (as I have hinted already,) as we have been, like Israel of old, peculiarly blest with mercies and privileges, and are as peculiar and singular in sinning; so we are like to be punished in a peculiar and particular manner also. So that if there be (as sure there is,) a rule to judge of the connection of mercies, sins and judgments, we may see our case, as well as that of Israel of old, in the prophetical threatenings of God to that people, when he says, You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore, will I punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos iii. 2.)

Seeing, therefore, this is the state and complexion of our time, let us take heed to ourselves, that we be not involved in the sins of it, lest we come under the judgments also that seem to hasten on this generation. Consider, for this end, the apostle's advice: Beware, says he, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. Let us not, therefore, hear the instruction that causeth us to err from the words of knowledge; but let us beware, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, we fall from our own steadfastness.

But yet, be not so selfish as to mind only your own concerns, but remember that ye are members of a city, of a church and nation, and that ye are members also of the catholic church of Christ that is every where dispersed. And therefore act as under all these ties and relations; and, if you can do no more, intercede at least with God, that he may be gracious: stand in the gap, that ye may, if possible, avert his displeasure. Act, therefore, as serious, faithful and importunate remembrancers of the Lord, giving him no rest, but crying unto him night and day until he arise, and until he make his Zion and Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth. (Isaiah lxii. 6, 7. Luke xviii. 7.)

There is yet a third consideration which I would add to the former, in order the more effectually to recommend this duty to you, viz. the improvement of your time. And this is what is, indeed, frequently insisted upon, but I am afraid very little lived up to, viz. that we are in the sight, and under the inspection of an all-seeing God, who is to be our judge at last.

O, my friends, is this a matter only of speculation to you? Dare any of you do that in the sight of God, which ye would be ashamed to do in the view of the world? I remember I have heard of an eminently holy man, who, being tempted by a harlot to commit lewdness with her, in a place where she was mistress and had the command, seemed to consent for the present, with this condition only, that she should find out a close retirement, where none could be present and see what they did: upon which she carried him from chamber to chamber, and from place to place; but he had still something to object against the privacy of every one of them. At length she brought him to a very dark and obscure corner, telling him that none could see what was done there but God and the devil. What, said he, is that nothing? You must carry me where neither God nor the devil can see us, else I will never do what you desire. And, I remember also, I have heard of another, who being tempted in like manner, consented upon condition of having liberty to choose the place; which being granted, he chose the public market-place. When she refused this, saying, she could not for shame do so in the open view of the world; he replied, that he durst far less do this in the sight of God; and asked how she durst do that in the sight of God, which she was ashamed to do before men.

Even the heathen moralist, Seneca, advises man to act in all things as if they had both God and the wisest and best of men looking on. Set Cato, Scipio, or Lælius before you, says he, or some such excellent person, upon whose appearance even the most wicked person would be frightened from doing amiss openly. But he adds in another place: What will it avail you, to hide yourself and your actings from men, since there is nothing concealed from God? for he looks into our breasts, and is present in our very minds and hearts. And elsewhere: It avails a man nothing, says he, to shut up or stifle conscience, since every

thing we do lies open to God's view; and, therefore, our great wisdom is to act so, that we may approve ourselves to him.

How consonant are such expressions to the sacred standard of our holy religion? And what shall we answer to our Master at the great day, if we suffer such persons to exceed and outrun us, who are Christians? Let us, therefore, mind the principle that swayed Joseph, when he said, under a very great temptation, considering his low and obnoxious condition: "Shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" And let us imitate David, who set the Lord always before him, and looked upon him as present at his right hand, to the end that he might never be moved, but be encouraged still to trust in him. For we are ever to remember, that our secret, as well as public sins, are set in the light of God's countenance; seeing the darkness hides us no more from God, than the meridian light of the sun.

But we must consider, likewise, that we have not only a constant witness and inspector of our actions without us, but one within us, even our own conscience; which doth excuse or accuse us, according as we behave and act. And as one says well on this head, *Quid prodest non habere conscium, habenti conscientiam? i. e.*, What avails it to have no witness of our actions, while we have a conscience that keeps an exact register of all we do? Only we must remember, that this is but a secondary witness; for if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

And now, my friends, I have done with what I had to say to the three considerations, from which I proposed to recommend and enforce this great duty of improving our time. And I leave it to you to consider, whether what I have said be not sufficient this way, through the blessing of God, and your pains and concern, to apply to yourselves what has been said.

Therefore, in the second place, I proceed to direct you, how ye may attain rightly and successfully to improve your time to the best advantage, as ye are Christians and accountable creatures. And this I shall do, by proposing three rules, which will take in all that is necessary or useful this way: though the first rule is the principal and only direct one, which doth take in the whole of our duty this way; the second and third being only subservient unto this, though exceedingly useful, if not necessary also, in their places.

The first rule is this, that ye take heed, that ye lose not your time, and the opportunities and seasons thereof, by sin and vanity; but that it be always filled up, with the conscientious and diligent discharge of all necessary duties.

This being, as I said already, the principal rule, in order to the regulation of our time; and being so contrived, as to direct us both negatively and positively, as to what we o avoid, and what we are to do; I shall accordingly consider it distinctly in both the parts of it.

The first part of this rule teaches us, how time is lost, and what we are, therefore, to avoid, in order to the right improvement of it. And it is necessary to premise this, before we consider the other part; for we can only then apply ourselves to fill up our time wisely, in the performance of those duties, in the discharge whereof the redemption and improvement of time consists; when we apprehend what those things are, which are detrimental and hurtful to our souls, both here and hereafter.

Now, in the general, we are to take care to rescue our time out of the hand of those two grand robbers, that thieve it away from us, viz. sin and vanity: for as we are carefully to avoid the mispending of our time, by thinking, doing, or speaking, what is sinful in itself; so we are to take heed of such things, which, though they are not simply sinful in themselves, are yet such trivial matters or by-concerns, as become sinful to us, when we spend too much time upon them, or mind them as if they were our most weighty and principal business.

But because those things, that are evil and sinful in themselves, such as blasphemies and lies, immorality and profaneness, ought not to be so much as named among Christians, or have a moment's time allowed them, so as to be entertained or thought upon with delight or design, far less brought forth in life and action; we shall, therefore, pass by these wholly at present; in order to consider those things, that, though lawful in themselves, ought not to be so minded, as to take up all or most of our time. Allow me, then, to give you my advice in these things following:

Be not too prodigal of your time, in the gratification of your senses, and the services of your body. Let the cultivation and adorning of your souls take up more of your time, than the clothing and dressing of your bodies. Be not buried in sleep and sloth too long, while time is so short and uncertain, and ye have so much business to fill it up with. Neither do ye allow yourselves more time than is necessary or convenient, for the feeding and pampering of your bodies. Be not like them, therefore, who are so severely reproved by God, for living sensually in this world, when they ought to have minded higher things; of whom this sad character is given: "That they put away far from them the evil day; that they lay upon beds of ivory, and did eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the stall, chanting at the sound of the viol, drinking wine out of bowls, and anointing themselves with the chiefest ointments: but that in the meantime they were altogether unmindful of the state of the church, and no way grieved for the afflictions of Joseph." (Amos vi. 3—6.) Therefore, as the apostle exhorts, let us walk honestly, as in the day, (or clear sunshine

of the gospel,) not in rioting, (or in dancings, κωμοις,) and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: for these things, (says he,) are the making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. (Rom. xiii. 13, 14.)

Spend not too much of your precious time in divertive exercises and recreations. We may, indeed, use these not only lawfully but profitably, both with respect to the health and strength of the body, and the vigour even of the mind; which being unbended for a while with innocent amusements, will be in better case to return again to close thinking. But we must not make recreation our business, as too many do, who are so intoxicated with the secret witchery of gaming, as to have their minds rendered almost incapable of any close application to serious and important matters.

Spend not too much of your time in company and discourse, unless business oblige you to do so. The company of atheistical and wicked men, especially if they be witty, and of an engaging temper, carries commonly an infection with it; and their discourse breathes a secret and insinuating poison, that every one has not a strong enough antidote in his nature to resist. And though the company we associate ourselves with be good, yet we are to remember the old saying, *Amici sunt fures temporis*, that friends are frequently the thieves that rob us of our time; the commodity that of all others we are to be most parsimonious of, seeing we can never retrieve its loss. To visit friends, is often a great duty; but it is frequently to the hurt both of the visitors and visited that these are made: for, as much time is commonly lost this way to no purpose, so the discourses that are the entertainment of most companies, are too often mere vanity, if not worse; for it is too customary at such times to give way to foolish talking and jesting, or to censorious reflections upon other persons. There is an innocent freedom, indeed, facetiousness in discourse, which is both allowable and pleasant: but alas, how soon doth this degenerate, if great care be not taken to keep our minds in a right poise? And if I appear to any to be rigid in what I say on this head, let it be remembered, that Christ has forewarned us, that we must give an account of every idle word, as well as unwarrantable action, in the day of judgment. As, therefore, we are to avoid moroseness on the one hand; so are we to take care that we tire not our friends by too frequent or too long visits. There are, indeed, some such friends in the world, though very rare to be found, who the more they are together, do the more love and profit one another. But as to ordinary friends, the case is quite otherwise: in relation to whom Solomon gives this wise advice: Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house, lest he be at last weary of thee. That is, according to the gloss of some upon the words: Make thyself precious; wear not out every man's threshold, by obtruding thyself upon them; neither make thyself vulgar and cheap, as a mean commodity, that is every man's money.

But, remember also, that ye may be guilty of mispending your time in vain and unprofitable musings, as well as in vain discourse. Idle thoughts are as foolish a waste of time as idle words; for every sort of thinking and meditation are not judicious no more than holy. And though a man think not upon his lusts, he may think very impertinently, and consequently sinfully.

And this is not only the fault and weakness of plebian but of learned heads, who mispend time frequently as much as any other sort of men, upon their *difficiles nugæ*, their useless, yet painful curiosities and niceties. This was the custom of the learned doctors of old Athens, who spent their days in almost nothing else, but telling or hearing some new notion, scheme, or theory; and then disputing, *pro et contra*, for and against it. But while they were earnest to dispute about *forma substantialis universale à parte rei*, *fuga vacui*, apathies, the possibility of motion, and such like *nugæ*, and whims, they forgot God and solid religion; and were such sceptics, or superstitiously ignorant, (for ye may interpret the words either way,) that in the midst of their multitude of gods, they were willing to erect one altar more, with this inscription, (v. 23,) Ἀγνώστῳ θεῷ, *To the unknown God.* It is true, indeed, there are many curiosities of this kind, that a wise man may improve to great advantage. But when they are made our main or only business and study, instead of being parergons, or by-studies, we are certainly far out of the road of true wisdom. What profit has the metaphysician, in abstracting from all particular beings, that he may define *ens* generically, as, *unum*, *verum*, *bonum*, while he is ignorant of him that is truly such. To how little purpose at length will the mathematician find he has studied, in order to adjust and determine the proportions of points, lines, sides and angles, if he neglect the proportions of piety and virtue? What will it avail the astronomer to see the planets through a tube, if he fall short of the happy world at last that is above all these? Is any man the better for being able to adjust and reconcile the Egyptian, Chaldee, and Grecian dynasties, by reducing all the different eras of nations to the Julian period, while he neglects to number his own days so as to apply his heart to true wisdom? And lastly, what advantage has any man, by being able to speak all the languages in the world, while he worships and praises God in none of them.

Nay, I tell you farther, that a man may even mispend his time in the service and worship of God, circumstantially considered. For though we worship God, yet what advantage can we reap by it, if we do so ignorantly, or hypocritically, or customarily, and merely for the fashion, or profanely

irreverently, or dull, or heartlessly? Nay, we may lose our labour this way also, when by this we thrust out more immediate, incumbent, and necessary duties; or when we neglect the performance of this, till we be altogether unfit for it, offering thus to the Lord a corrupt thing while we have a male in our flock.

And if thus we may mispend time, how much more are we likewise to do so, while the cares of the world, and the inordinate desire of what we call its pleasures, profits, and honours, jostle out religion, both from our thoughts and lives? Solomon advises us, not to labour to be rich; but he immediately subjoins, cease from thy own wisdom. Whereby he insinuates that a man must be mortified to his carnal and worldly ratiocinations, and taught by the Spirit of God to know the true value of things, before he can possibly learn this lesson from him. However, he positively determines these two things, that he that hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and that he that does so, shall not be found to be innocent; mottoes that all men might find it convenient to write on the head of their books of accounts; and if Solomon's words have little effect upon you, consider what a greater than Solomon says, of a covetous or anxiously solicitous disposition and practice, in the sixth chapter of Matthew, where he represents it and condemns it as unchristian and heathenish, and as unreasonable and pernicious. And, after all, remember these serious and pungent words of his, "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And now, I hope, I have said enough as to the things we ought to avoid, if we would rightly improve our time: but seeing it is not sufficient to know how time is lost, unless we know also what we are to be occupied about, and wherein the best and wisest disposal of our time stands: therefore, we must farther consider the great and necessary duties with which we ought to fill up the seasons and vacuities of our life.

And therefore, I proceed now to

The second part of this great and principal direction concerning the improvement of our time; which is this, that we take care to fill it up with the conscientious and diligent discharge of all necessary duties.

And here, though in general we cannot but know, that our time is to be wholly taken up in getting and doing good; yet we must remember that it is only in relation to time that we are to consider our duties in this place. And therefore, I am only to consider here those great and necessary duties which are always obligatory upon us, and the neglect of which is inseparable from the misimprovement of time. For it cannot be supposed that I should so much as hint all those things that come under the -al notions of duty, or consider those things which particular circumstances and emergents render obligatory to us, or such duties which are called relative, from the stations we are in, and the relations we bear to others.

There are, therefore, a few things only which I shall recommend to you as altogether useful and necessary, and which none of us can ever plead exemption from.

And, in the first place, let me beseech you, to improve your time, by frequent, diligent, and serious reading, and studying the holy Scriptures. In the first book of which ye will find your minds led up to the first antiquities, which no other book beside can furnish you with any just account of. There we see the origin of man and the world; man's primeval state, when first created; the origin of sin, death, and misery; the subversion of the first race of men, by the great deluge which heathen antiquities speak of only as through a cloud; the first spring and dawning of mercy and hope to lapsed man; the succession of the first and most primitive church, and the beginning and progress of Gentile idolatry, superstition, and wickedness; together with the first origin of nations, cities, arts, governments, languages; and in all these the superintending providence of God, in its justice and goodness, wisdom and steddiness. And by this knowledge we bring back, as it were, all past time, and make it our own as to our profit and advantage. In the other books of Moses, we have an account of God's erecting a poor, oppressed people to be a church, and God's peculiar possession: wherein we see his wonderful appearance for them, by signs and miracles; his strange and unusual way with them in all their journey, in trying, feeding, and preserving them; his giving them laws ecclesiastical, moral and political; his wrapping up most profound mysteries under ceremonies and customs; and his bringing them into a noble country with power and glory, destroying their enemies before them; together with innumerable observable occurrences, and theoretical and useful things to be taken notice of therein. The historical part of the Old Testament that follows that of the law, as the Jews call it, gives us a relation of most admirable and great revolutions and transactions as ever fell out in the world. Wherein we may observe the various, and yet uniform steps of Divine Providence in governing the world and the church; God's trying, and yet rewarding the righteous; his permitting sin, and yet punishing sinners. In all which occurrences we have the best examples that can be to be imitated by us, and an account of the worst also, that we may avoid such pernicious courses. The book of Job is a mirror, wherein we may learn what afflictions the best men are liable unto, and what reproaches they may unjustly fall under even by good men like themselves, through mistake and infirmity: as also how we ought to behave

in the time of calamity, and what the end of the Lord at length usually is. The Psalms are the most excellent model of practical and experimental piety, and the best prayer book and directory for devotion that ever the world was blessed with. The Proverbs of Solomon are the most excellent and refined ethics that were ever published, or ever will be. Ecclesiastes is the noblest picture and demonstration of the world's vanity. And Solomon's Song the most spiritual pastoral, the finest allegory, and the divinest poetical description of the love between Christ and devout souls that ever saw the light. The prophetical writings give us the noblest and distinctest idea of God's government of nations, and the righteousness and equity of all his providences and administrations; besides innumerable other lessons to be learned from thence.

And, as for the New Testament, the first thing that occurs to us, is the most excellent part of the whole Bible; I mean, the fourfold history of our blessed Saviour. O, let your thoughts dwell long, and strike deep here; for all the historical passages of the gospels, all the wise and sage parables to be found there, all the miracles wrought, all the prophecies mentioned, all the truths revealed, and all the counsels and exhortations there given; I say, all these are so many rich veins of what is more precious than the finest gold, and admirable and useful above all thought. The book of the Acts of the Apostles gives us a noble and impartial account of the beginning and progress of the gospel, and the first settlement of the Church; wherein we have a naked and clear view of Christianity in its pure and primitive dress; together with some most profitable examples, and useful discourses. The apostolical Epistles give us a full and copious account of the religion of the blessed Jesus, both in its principles and practice, its origin and design. So that these are sufficient alone, if rightly understood, to enlighten our minds, to influence our affections and designs, and to regulate our lives and conversations. And the book of Revelation, though dark and enigmatical, represents to us, in an august and lofty manner, the rectorship of our Lord Jesus in governing the world, overruling and disposing the designs and actions of men, and making all things at length work together for the illustration of his own glory, and his people's good.

Thus we see something of the special properties of the several parts of the Scripture, and what excellent things may be learned from thence. But let us consider also those properties that are common to the whole Bible, and every part of it. Let us, therefore, look upon all the books that compose this sacred volume, as divinely inspired, and as designed in all respects, for our profit and edification. Therefore, let us read and study them, not as the word of men, but as they are, indeed, the word of God, i. e., so as to prize and value them according to their worth; to love and delight in them; to praise God for them; to meditate upon them as men, not as children; and to conform our lives wholly to them. And in order to become thus the humble, impartial, and obedient scholars of Christ, let me put you in mind of one thing, than which nothing is more neglected, and yet nothing more necessary in order to profit truly by the Bible, viz. that ye have a care of laying down any opinion or scheme of opinions in matters religious, previously to your having impartially examined the sacred Scriptures in these matters. For they that do so, come not to be taught of God, but to dictate to the Almighty, and are not afraid often to wiredraw the sacred text, in order to force it to speak, not what it really does, but what they would have it do, as best suits with their prejudices, passions and party designs, that I say not lusts also. Therefore, let us desire you (as I have often from the pulpit,) to make the Bible itself, and particularly the New Testament, your chief (and in a proper sense only,) system, confession of faith and creed. For whatever excellency there is in any human compositions of this kind, we are to own them no farther than we find them to agree and harmonize with the divine oracles.

In the next place, let us improve our time by frequent, serious, and close meditation on divine and profitable things. Let the character of the blessed man, (Psalms i. ii. iii.,) be ours, by our meditating on the laws and truths of God day and night. For to what purpose do we read the Scriptures and other books, if we be not at pains to penetrate into the things therein contained? Now it were endless, and in some sense impossible to name all those things that may be profitably thought upon. But, perhaps, it may not be improper to suggest to you the principal heads of sacred theology; by which, as so many avenues, ye may attain mentally to converse with God and truth.

In the first place, then, meditate on God himself, his attributes, works and word, and the blessed Persons of the Godhead. Then think on man in his first innocent state, in his lapsed condition, and begun recovery; and on thyself particularly, thy nature, thy faculties, thy state, thy faults, thy end, thy duties, and thy privileges and advantages. Meditate often on Jesus Christ, his person, his properties, his offices, his merits, his sufferings, his conquests, his business and work now in heaven, and his management of the church on earth, and the whole world in general. Then think of the Holy Spirit, his office, work and influences. And let the church also be considered in its obligations, ordinances, sufferings, progress and victory. And think likewise of the particular state of the saints of God on earth, their temptations, the principles by which they are actuated, their conversation, and the promises made them. Hence let your minds be led in to contemplate the great blessings

of true religion, such as conversion, justification, adoption, sanctification, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, communion with God, the prelibations of heaven, and final perseverance. And then let your thoughts terminate upon what we call the last things. Think, therefore, on death, its certainty: yet the uncertainty of the time of it: the great change it brings upon us, how terrible it will be to be unprepared for it, and the happiness of being ready for so great a change. Then think upon the dissolution of this world, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and this vast pile of our planetary world become one great bonfire. And from thence let your minds contemplate the great day of judgment, those grand assizes, where all mankind must be impartially judged, and sentence be pronounced upon them accordingly. And, after all, let your thoughts pass beyond the limits of time, and step into the eternal state. There go down to the infernal prison for a while, and view the horrors of the place, the frightful aspect of the company, and the intenseness and perpetuity of the torments. Then mount the steep ascent, and soar aloft upon the wings of contemplation, to the blissful regions of the celestial paradise. There satiate your thoughts with the pleasures and beauties of the place, the felicity and joys of that state and government, the excellency of the company, the glory of the discoveries made there, the noble employment that takes them up, and the eternity and immutability of all these. Think, then, upon these few hints, my friends, (where there are almost as many subjects as words,) and ye can never want matter for your thoughts to work upon.

And now, seeing all our study and meditation must be so managed that we may receive some real and abiding advantage, let us ever call ourselves to a serious and impartial account as to the spending of our time: for how can we satisfy ourselves, without conversing with our own souls, in order to know how it is with them? And how can we know ourselves, if we never examine and try how it is with us? If merchants, and men of business are so careful to set down every thing in their journals and books of account, that they may be able exactly to balance what they call their debt and credit, their losses and gains: ought not Christians to mind their eternal concerns, with the like exactness and accuracy? How wonderful does Seneca speak on this head, when he tells us, that in the imitation of one Sextius, whom he highly commends, he had been accustomed to examine himself every night! "When at night," says he, "the candle is out, and all is still and quiet, then do I look back upon, and search all the day past by measuring and running over all I have thought, said, or done. I hide nothing from myself; I overlook and pass by nothing. I say to myself, and so thou hast done unadvisedly; do so no more. And again, I ask myself, what evil have I healed? What vice have I resisted? What passion have I moderated? What lesson have I learned? And what good have I done? And O," says he, "what a sweet sleep follows, after this recognition of a man's self, when one is conscious of his impartiality and seriousness, in the review and censure of himself and his own manners!"

And to this purpose, we find an excellent direction in the golden verses, as they are called of old Pythagoras; which begins thus, *Mηδε νεκυν*, &c. The sense of which I render thus:

Before thine eyes to slumber sweet give place,
Be sure the past day's journal first to trace.
Survey thy steps and actions all: then say,
Which good? Which bad? How ordered were they?

O then, my friends, let it not be said of us, that we live in neglect of this duty, lest heathens rise up in judgment against us and condemn us.

But since we are then not born for ourselves only, let us be concerned to promote the good of others also. Let us, therefore, improve time, by being useful in our stations to the church of God and good men, and to all as far as we can: for so we are obliged, as we are members of communities, cities and nations, and as we are inhabitants of the world. And in order to be thus useful, let us set before ourselves the glorious example of Christ, whose meat and drink it was to do the will of his heavenly Father, and who went about always doing good. And therefore, let us be ashamed to live as useless plants in the world, which do only cumber the ground.

And, in order to perform all these things aright, and so to improve our time to the best advantage, let us be sure to spend as much of our time in prayer as possibly we can: for as it is thus, that we attain to most immediate and direct communion with God; so it is this way that we attain to be strengthened and directed in the performances of all the duties we are obliged to be taken up in. Therefore, let us remember, that it is not without just ground, that we are commanded to pray always, and to pray without ceasing. The sense of which expressions, I take to be this: that, as we are to keep up stated times of solemn prayer to God, and to have recourse to him in a more special manner, upon extraordinary emergents and occurrences, in order to be peculiarly directed and assisted then from God, so we are ever to keep ourselves, as much as possibly we can, in a praying frame, and for this end, to fill up all the vacuities of other affairs and studies with ejaculatory prayers and breathings. But, besides all these things, there is one thing farther that I never found any writer take notice of, that I look upon to be the principal design of such expressions; and this is, that we be careful to prosecute the design of our prayers from one time of

our life to another, waiting for the answer of them, and improving the same in praise, when received; *e. g.* If a Christian pray long for a full victory over such or such temptations or lust, let him prosecute this design in all his prayers until he receive an answer; which, when he has got, let him turn this from the catalouge of his petitions to that of his thanksgivings. And so let him act also, with respect to mercies to be received, promises to be fulfilled, and miseries to be averted.

And thus, I have at length, finished the first and principal rule I had to propose to you, with respect to the improvement of time in both the parts thereof. And now, I am to hint to you two more, which are only subservient ones; though, at the same time, worthy of your more serious thoughts.

The second rule, therefore, is, that in order to the right improvement and disposal of time, we do both dedicate ourselves solemnly to God, and as explicitly as we can, in order to spend our lives wholly in his service; and be concerned in order to this, to keep a secret and exact register or diary of all our own actions, and the providences of God in relation to us.

But seeing I have hinted something in relation to both the parts of this rule in another discourse, viz. that concerning the ministerial work; I shall not, therefore, trouble you with any thing more upon either of these heads.

Only let me say this one thing farther in relation to the keeping of a diary or private register; that every man must be left to his own discretion, as to the manner and method of adjusting those things that occur to him in this life. As, therefore, some may think it best to set things down according to the series of the time they may fall out in; so others may look upon the method of heads, or common places to be the best. And if any serious person shall think this last way the best (for as to the first, the method cannot be missed,) he may, perhaps, find these heads not unreasonable or useless, viz. that after a short series of his life, to be farther continued, he proceeds in this order.

1. To consider God's providence to him, in adapting and disposing of him for particular ends, agreeably to the faculties of his soul, and constitution of his body, together with his external circumstances, in relation to both.

2. What his conversation has been, with the time and manner of it.

3. How far, and in what way he has been led into covenant with God, with the renovations of the same.

4. What crosses and troubles he has met with, and how far these have been improved and sanctified.

5. The dangers, spiritual or temporal, he has been delivered from.

6. The sins he is most inclinable unto naturally, and those he has been most guilty of and overcome by.

7. How frequently, in what manner, and upon what occasions, he has been deserted by his God; and, so far as he can conclude, for what ends these have happened to him.

8. What evidences he has had of the wrath and displeasure of God upon the account of sin.

9. And what intimations he has met with of the love and kindness of his heavenly Father.

10. What temptations, inward or outward, he has been most assaulted by, and what he has found to be the best antidote and relief against these.

11. What observations and experiences he has met with, to confirm him in the belief of the Christian religion, as to the being of God, the divinity of Christ, and the existence of invisible powers.

12. What observable and remarkable things have happened to him in his business, studies, or converse with men, that may be of use to himself or others, as to life or conversation in the world.

13. Particularly what has occurred to him in the remarkable turns and changes of his life, in health and sickness.

14. What intimacy, familiarity and communion God has graciously admitted him into with himself; and what answers and returns of prayer God has granted him.

And, 15. What special and peculiarly distinguishing circumstances he has been under, wherein the footsteps of a peculiar conduct have been conspicuous to him.

Under these heads I humbly suppose all things may be regularly disposed, that can be thought necessary to compose a private Christian's register. Though I presume not to dictate to any man, but I leave every one to follow his own method.

The third and last rule is this, that (in order to the right regulation of time,) we set down some short, rational and natural directory, according to which we may be enabled and assisted to improve our time.

But, seeing every one is to compose this, according to his own circumstances, there is no man that can justly prescribe to another in this matter. Nay, there is none that can set to himself such a directory, as to all particulars, that he can be supposed to be tied up to, at all times; since the providence of God is so various this way, that our circumstances render our condition, and consequently our duty, almost as different as the weather is. And therefore, a spiritual prudence is that which is to every one the great directory of his life. For when the providence of God renders our particular rules and methods impracticable, unlawful or inconvenient, it is both our duty and wisdom to fall in with the present circumstances of things, rather than with our own arbitrary determinations; seeing, then, the state of the question is, whether God's method or ours should be followed?

All, therefore, that I shall propose to you here, is the consideration of three things; which are easily minded, and may be put in practice every day, whatever our circumstances are.

1. When ye awake in the morning, let this be among your first thoughts: How shall I spend this day to the best advantage, for the honour of God, and my own good? And when ye have considered what is most proper to promote these ends; then firmly propose to yourselves your business through the day, and fixedly resolve upon acting so; and accordingly proceed and fall to work.

2. In the midst of all your business or studies, allow yourselves some time of breathing, in order to reflect upon these two things, viz. what ye are and what ye do; putting these frequently to yourselves by way of query, thus: What am I? *i. e.* am I sure I am in favour with God? am I, indeed, regenerated? am I spiritual in thought, affection and design? And again; What do I? *i. e.*, am I employed as I ought to be; Are my ends right? Are the means I make use of lawful and proper? Are my studies, or my business such as I ought now to be occupied about? Do I behave in all respects as one that is journeying towards the better country?

3. In the evening sleep not before ye have examined yourselves, as to the actions and occurrences of the past day. But having spoken already to this duty, I shall only add here, that it will be of great use for you to examine yourselves as to two things, by way of question to yourselves, thus: What has God's providence been to me this day? What have I seen or heard that deserves special observation and improvement? What mercies have I received? What troubles have I met with? What dangers have I escaped? did God assist me, or desert me in my devotions or business? Have I learned nothing new from His holy word? Did He seem to receive or shut out my prayers? And again: what has been my way towards God? Have I done nothing to dishonour him, or to discredit my profession? Have I acted so as to approve myself to my God, in thought and design, as well as in word and action? Wherein have I failed in my duty? What have I done for religion? And what for my own good, or the good of others? What have I done that I ought to beg the pardon of? And what have I to praise God for?

Now, my friends, I hope these three generals are easy, both to be remembered and practised. For, as for the particular questions I have suggested, they are only proposed to show more fully the design of the general ones: and therefore, every one may pick and choose, or vary from these, as his own circumstances do require, and as his prudence will direct: I only desire you then to remember the three heads themselves, with relation to the morning, the day, and the evening, as they are comprehended in mnemonical words, propose, reflect, and examine.

And thus I have, at length, come to the end of that which I had to say to you upon this great and practical head of improving time to the best advantage; which I conclude with these few watch words. Spend not your time so, as to be afterwards obliged bitterly to repent of what ye have done: spend no time on that which ye cannot review and look back upon with comfort: spend no time so as ye dare not pray for a blessing from God upon what ye do: spend no time, without some respect to God's glory, or your own and other's good. And be sure so to spend and improve your time, that your great work may be done before your life ends; then, when your few days are lived over, ye may joyfully enter in upon a happy eternity.

Now, having finished all I had to say, by way of improvement of the apocalyptical thoughts I have presented you with; I desire ye may candidly interpret my design, and favourably construe my performance. And one thing I hope ye will remember, that seeing this discourse is by way of epistle, I have, therefore, used an epistolary freedom, both in what I have said, and in the way of writing, not tying myself up to so close a method as in other discourses, though I have not altogether neglected even that: but if I have failed in any respect, remember farther, that I write to those I look upon to be my true, good, and kind friends. Let, therefore, the name and ties of friendship plead for me, where ye may discern my infirmities, and induce you to pass a favourable sentence upon my attempt to assist you in the way to heaven.

And now, that I write to such dear friends, and have mentioned the ties of friendship, let me beg of you that ye would make it your business to live together as such: for there is nothing Christ has enjoined on us more, than mutual love, in so much, as he has made it the badge of our Christianity, when he tells us, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." And therefore, it was (see Eph. ii. 14, 15—17, &c.,) one great end of his coming into the world, to introduce a divine and universal friendship among men. For, as the devil promotes his kingdom in the world, by dissensions, emulations, hatred, and malice; so our blessed Master carries on his by union, gentleness, peaceableness, and universal kindness, love, and charity.

But, besides a general friendship, it would be of great use to cultivate a peculiar one with one or more, whose disposition is most agreeable to ours. And seeing there is little of this now to be found in this selfish age, let me give you such a description of it as may make you fall in love with it. And if this appear too florid, remember that, as the subject itself is so, it is part of a youthful composition of mine, in a letter to a worthy friend, who had desired my thoughts upon this head many years ago. "True friendship is a divine and spiritual relation of minds, an union of souls, a marriage of hearts, and a harmony

of designs and affections, which, being founded on a known agreeableness, and entered into by a mutual hearty consent, groweth up into the purest kindness, and most endearing love; maintaining itself by the openest freedom, the warmest sympathy, and the closest secrecy. And such friends are as twins, every way alike; or, like sweet flowers, agreeing in beauty, though, perhaps, differing in colour, like the rose and lily, the primrose and violet, twisted round one another, and mixing both colours and smells. Or, they may be compared to two pleasant rivulets flowing from one spring and fountain, though separated, perhaps, from some unlucky rising of the ground, yet meeting again in some kind and flowery mead, which they bless by their cheerful and gentle meanders, and it may be thence separated again at some distance, where they glide along silently, murmuring now and then to one another, and mutually complaining of the rude banks that obstruct their joining: until at length, having run their full course, and becoming one stream, they pour themselves forth into the great ocean itself, and become one with it also. So, that like the rest of the bitter sweets of this life, friendship has its ups and downs until it flow into heaven, from whence it took its rise: which is the consummation of all divine friendships, and where all true friends do at length happily meet, never to part."

And now, my friends, I shall conclude this long epistle in the words of a famous doctor and father of the ancient church:* "Learn, O faithful and religious men, and carefully apprehend the design of the gospel polity. For which end, study to conquer fleshly lusts, to be humble in heart, pure in mind, and masters of your passions. If ye are called to suffer, act heroically, and do something over and above mere passiveness, for the honour of your Lord. If ye are unjustly treated, evidence that ye are not contentious: if hated, love your enemies; if persecuted, endure it; and if reviled, answer no man otherwise than by prayers and good wishes. Die to sin, crucify your affections for God, and cast all your care upon your Lord and Master. That thus, ye may at length, reach the glorious place, where millions of angels, and the glorious assembly of the first born are praising God, and where the holy apostles, prophets, patriarchs, martyrs, and all the righteous are. To this blessed society, let us labour and pray to be joined through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom be glory forever."

Now, that both ye and I may attain, through grace to be thus happy, is, and shall be the serious, fervent, and constant prayer of, my very dear friends, yours to love and serve you in the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

ROBERT FLEMING.

London, January 1, 1701,
being the first day both
of the year and century.

A POSTSCRIPT,

CONTAINING A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE APOCALYPTICAL INTERPRETATIONS ADVANCED IN THE PRECEDING DISCOURSE.

AFTER I had finished the foregoing discourse, and that all the sheets were almost printed, I was earnestly urged by a friend, to say something to secure the foundation I go upon: especially, because the learning of Grotius and Dr. Hammond had influenced many to follow another way of interpreting the Revelation, as the reputation of Mr. Baxter had swayed others to think well of the same. And, when I urged that Dr. More, in his *Mystery of Iniquity*, and Dr. Cressener, in his *Demonstration of the First Principles of the Protestant Interpretations of the Apocalypse*, had done this sufficiently already: he replied, that these books were both voluminous and dark, and not easy to be purchased by every one; and that, therefore, some short account of this matter at this time seemed to be necessary. I urged many things against this, as, that this advice came too late, and that, should I contract, never so much, it would swell this part of my book too much, to keep a due proportion with the other discourses, and indeed, make the whole too bulky. But after all, importunity, and the respect I bore my friend, prevailed with me to say something to all those things, that he thought I ought to premise. Therefore, not to spend any longer time, in giving the reasons why I did not speak to these things before in their proper place, or why I do so now, I shall give my thoughts of this book, and the first principles of the right interpretation of it, in some propositions, which do gradually lay the foundation of what I advanced before.

Proposition I.—The Revelation was written by the Apostle John, and is a sacred and canonical book of the New Testament.

I hope there is no Christian, that will dis-

* Basil. Magn. in his Νεοσκηται προς τους νεους. The words begin thus: Μαθε συ ω νεανια αναξιωτατε,

pute the truth of this proposition with me: for, besides, that the style of John may be easily traced in this book, notwithstanding the difference of the subject, from that, which he wrote of in his gospel and epistles; he does frequently make mention of himself, and that with such peculiar circumstances, as agree with none but the apostle: (as we see, chap. i. 1, 2, 4, 9. See also chap. xxi. 2, and xxii. 8).

I know, indeed, that some of the ancients doubted of this, as Caius, a Latin father, mentioned by Eusebius, Hist. lib. iii. cap. 28, and Dionysius of Alexandria, who made a great noise against it for a while, as we see in Eusebius also, Hist. lib. vii. cap. 4. But, yet even this man declares, that he owns it to be a sacred book, though not written by the Apostle John; wherein, he speaks what we must look upon, to be altogether absurd; for if St. John be not the author, it must be an imposture, seeing his name is inserted in it, as being the penman. So, that if it be not St. John's, it is no sacred book. Or, if it be a sacred book, the author is none but the beloved apostle. But the weakness and inconsistency of Dionysius's reasoning against this book, are sufficiently, though briefly exposed by Monsieur du Pin, both in his Preliminary Dissertation to his *Bibliotheque des Auteurs Ecclesiastiques*, and in his History of the Canon of the Books of Scripture.

And if this were any argument against the divinity of this book, that some persons have doubted of it, or denied it to be canonical, there is hardly one book in the New Testament that would stand the test; seeing we find in the ancient church history, that there have been not only particular men, but even sects of them, that have excepted, some against one book, and some against others. And we know that the epistles of James and Jude, and the second and third epistles of John, and that admirable epistle to the Hebrews, have been controverted, as well as the Apocalypse: of the authority of which neither papist nor Protestant, Grecian nor Armenian Christian, doubts at this day.

And as all Christians do now acquiesce in the Revelation as a canonical book; so, excepting those I mentioned, and the heretics called Alogians, all the eminent Fathers of the church received it of old. So did Justin Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryph. Iræneus, lib. iv. cap. 37, and 50, and lib. v. cap. 30, and apud Euseb. lib. v. cap. 8. Tertullian, adv. Marc. lib. iii. cap. 5. Clemens Alexandrinus, apud Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 23. Origen in Matt. and in Joh. and apud Euseb. lib. vi. cap. 25, and Eusebius himself, Hist. lib. iv. cap. 28. Nay, all the other Fathers agree in this also, viz. Epiphanius, Victorinus, Theophilus, Cyprian, Methodius, Jerome; and other authors quoted by Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome, viz. Melito, Hippolitus, Victorinus, &c.

But for my own part, were all these authorities wanting, there is that in this book itself, that would enforce me to own it as divine; for, besides the augustness of its style, the wisdom of its contexture, and the purity of its design and counsels, there is something that I want a name for, that commands my belief and veneration, and insinuates itself into my affection and conscience, as if Christ himself breathed something divine in every line. But the clear view of the fulfilling of the several parts of its prophecy, is an argument that even several other books of the New Testament want.

Proposition II. The book of the Revelation of John was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.

The notion of Grotius, upon which his interpretation of the Apocalypse is founded, is this: That the seven kings or heads of the beast mentioned, (Rev. xvii. 10.) are not to be understood of seven several forms of government, but of seven particular emperors, viz. Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian and Titus, and that Domitian is the eighth, who was of the seventh; because, as he pretends, he governed during his father's absence.

The foundation which he lays for the probation of this is, that John was banished into Patmos, in the reign of Claudius: but that though he saw his visions then, he did not write them till Vespasian's time. For he must make this last supposition, as well as the first, else his notion would be condemned immediately, seeing, it is said, that five of these kings were fallen, (Rev. xvii. 19;) that is, says he and Hammond, when he *wrote*, not when he *saw* these visions. But how false this is, any body may see with half an eye; seeing these words are not John's, but the angel's to him. And therefore, the defenders of this opinion must find out *five* emperors that were fallen before Claudius, if they will restrict these heads of the beast to particular men; for if the angel spake these words to John in the days of Claudius, they must relate to them that went before, or to none.

This is enough to destroy this notion of theirs, and I know not how it is possible for any of their admirers to save their credit this way. But seeing the principal thing they found upon is this, that John saw the apocalyptical visions in the days of Claudius, and that so all, or at least most of the Revelation, relates to things that fell out before the destruction of Jerusalem; I shall say something farther to disprove this assertion, and to confirm the verity of our proposition.

Now there are only two things adduced by Grotius and Hammond to prove that John was in Patmos in Claudius's reign: the first is, that Claudius raised a persecution against both Jews and Christians, and that being the first persecutor, it is probable that John was banished at that time.

The second is, that Epiphanius does expessly assert, that it was by Claudius that John was banished to Patmos.

As to the first of these, it is nothing but a supposition without any proof; for we have no account, either in the Acts of the Apostles, or in any other writer, that Claudius did ever persecute either Jews or Christians. And *Lactantius de Mort. Pers.* does expressly assert, that no emperor did persecute the Christians before Nero. It is true, Suetonius says, *Claudius Judæos impulsore Chresto tumultuantes, Roma expulit.* And Luke tells us, that Claudius banished the Jews from Rome, which occasioned Aquila and Priscilla, and other Christian Jews, to retire from Rome: but neither of them say that he persecuted the Christians, or even the Jews. Now, as for the expression of Suetonius, *impulsore Chresto,* or *Christo,* the meaning must be this, that the Jews that did not believe, going about to stir up the government at Rome, as they did every where else (as is plain from the book of the Acts,) against the Christians, and appearing against them in a tumultuous manner, upon the occasion of Christ; complaints might, probably, be brought to the emperor, who, no doubt, upon this account, banished all of that nation from Rome: so that Suetonius having a confused notion of Christ, might easily be induced to express himself this way. And now that this was all that Claudius did against the Christians, is plain to me from one argument that has escaped Dr. More, but is to me unanswerable, taken from the eighteenth chapter of the Acts; where, after the sacred historian had taken notice of Claudius's banishing the Jews out of Rome, and that of Aquila and Priscilla's being lately come, upon that account, from Italy to Corinth; he tells us of Paul's lodging with them, because he was of the same occupation. But being pressed in spirit, to preach Christ, upon the coming of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia, he goes into their synagogue, and reasons with the Jews and proselytes there, upon this head; and having converted some, particularly Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and Justus, in whose house he afterwards disputed; Crispus, no doubt, being thrown out of his office, and Sosthenes put in his stead, and Paul continuing to preach in Justus's house, which joined to the synagogue, the Jews are incensed to such a degree, as to rise tumultuously against Paul. Sosthenes, therefore, the new chief ruler of the synagogue, and the rest of the unbelieving Jews, make an insurrection, and seize upon Paul, and carry him to the judgment-seat, before the proconsul Gallio, that excellent Roman, the elder brother of Seneca. He tells the Jews, that if Paul, or any other man, were guilty of what was lewd, wicked, or unjust, that in that case he was obliged to punish such persons according as the Roman law and justice did require. But seeing they accused Paul of nothing of that kind, but only of doctrinal matters, relating to their own law and religion, he had nothing to do with them; and therefore, he drove them all away, and set Paul at liberty, which made the Gentiles fall upon Sosthenes, the chief author of this tumult, and beat him before the judgment-seat; which Gallio permitted to be done and connived at, either as judging that he did deserve to be so treated, or as supposing it might prevent the Jews from acting so factiously and tumultuously again.

Now, after this short, but exact account of this history, it will be easy to see how precarious and groundless, nay false, Grotius's opinion is, of a persecution being raised against Jews and Christians, in the days of Claudius; for, if there had been any such thing, or any edict for it, how came Gallio to tolerate a public synagogue of the Jews, and suffer Paul to preach openly? Or, if the Christians were only ordered to be persecuted, why did not the Jews use this, as the reason of their accusing Paul, who to be sure wanted not a good will to have done so, and were not ignorant that this would have been the main argument to prevail with the proconsul? And had there been any such edict, can we imagine that Gallio was ignorant of it? for so he must have been, seeing he tells the Jews, that he had no orders to punish any man for his religion or sentiments that way, but only those that were guilty of wickedness or lewdness in life. If any say, that his temper was, to care for none of these things, I answer, this expression may, indeed, denote his temper, but I suppose it speaks forth not only that, but his principle and sentiment, as judging it unrighteous to persecute, or punish any man for mere opinion. But, whatever this had been, had there been any edict for persecuting the Christians or Jews, he durst not have neglected his orders, especially when the edict must have been so recent, and when he had what might have passed for a just reason of his punishing both the party accusing, and the party accused, viz. their disturbing (as he might have represented it,) of the public peace. But, indeed, it is too plain to need any farther proof, that Claudius's banishing the Jews out of Rome, was accompanied with no persecution, either against them or against the Christians. And this Dr. Hammond confirms, by what he says in his annotations on the thirty-first verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts, forgetting, that this way he destroys his own foundation of interpreting the Revelation: where, upon these words of Luke, that Agrippa, Festus, and Pernice, and the rest of the company, after they had heard Paul's defence, did conclude that he had done nothing that deserved either death or imprisonment; the Doctor observes, that the reason why they did conclude so, was, because there had been as yet no edict emitted against the Christians, by any of the emperors: and this was the reason also, says he, why Galli-

the proconsul of Achai, said publicly, that it was not for him to judge of things that the Roman laws had determined nothing about: for, continues the Doctor, though Claudius had commanded the Jews to leave Italy, by which the Christian Jews were forced to go away also, not as they were Christians, but because they were Jews; yet there was no law made against Christians, as such, at this time. It is true, he says, that John was not only banished, as Aquila and Priscilla were, but confined in the isle of Patmos. But he should have given the reason why John was the only person persecuted: however, I shall examine this assertion, and the reason that the Doctor gives for it in other places of his annotations.

We come, therefore, now, in the second place, to consider the testimony of Epiphanius, upon whose credit alone Grotius and Hammond, believe that John was in Patmos in Claudius's time. And here, by the way, I cannot forbear to observe the strange mistake of Dr. Lightfoot, who agrees in the main with these learned men, in interpreting the Revelation, in ralation to the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore, makes John to see these visions long before that; but has this peculiar to himself, that he imagines John was not banished there, but went thither voluntarily to preach the gospel to the inhabitants: whereas, John himself doth expressly tell us, that he was there as a sufferer and witness for Christ, (chap. i. v. 9,) "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." So that as this refutes Dr. Lightfoot, and confirms what Grotius and Hammond agree in, that John was not in Patmos as a traveller, but as a prisoner and sufferer; so it is enough to refute even them also: for the words do plainly insinuate, that John was not the only persecuted man at this time, but that there was then a persecution raised against all Christians in general; and therefore, we may be assured that he was not in that island in the days of Claudius, in whose time we have proved there was no persecution.

But to return: Epiphanius says, indeed, that John saw his visions in Patmos, in the reign of Claudius. Heres. 51, Sect. 12 and 33. But can this single authority weigh down all antiquity, that says the contrary? shall we believe him rather than Ireneus, who lived two hundred years before him, and was the scholar of Polycarp, the scholar of John himself? Now, what can be plainer than the words of Ireneus, lib. 5, cap. 30, as they are preserved in the original by Eusebius, hb. 5, cap. 8, Hist. Eccl., Ει γαρ εδει αναφανδον τω νυν καιρω κηρυττεσθαι το ονομα αυτου, δι αυτου αν ερρεθη τα και την Αποκαλυψιν εωρακοτος· ου γαρ πριν χρονου πολυου, αλλα σχεδον επι της ημετερας γενεας, προς τω τελει της Δομετιανου αρχης. That is, if his name (viz. that of Antichrist, or the beast,) had been openly to be divulged at this time, it would, no doubt, have been told by him that saw the apocalyptical visions: for it is not a long time since he saw these, but even in some sense, in our own time, viz. towards the end of the reign of Domitian. And that Ireneus had just reason to say, that John's seeing the Revelation was almost in his own time, or within the memory of the men of that generation, if not his own also, is plain from chronology: for, he being the scholar of Polycarp, who was martyred in the year of Christ 167, and being himself put to death in the year 202, if we suppose that he wrote this but ten or twelve years before his death, yet he might justly say, that there was but about an age's difference from his time, and that wherein John saw the Revelation: for if John was in Patmos, towards the end of Domitian's reign, it could not be sooner, in any propriety of speech, than the year 90, seeing he began his government A. D. 81, and died 96. And who can doubt, but Ireneus does deliver here, what his master Polycarp had told him: for, as none knew the history of John better than that worthy person, so none had better opportunity to know what related to this matter than Ireneus, by reason of his long and intimate acquaintance with him. This seemed a foundation sure enough of old to Eusebius: and if some men had not some private ends to promote, by opposing it, might be a sufficient foundation to all men still. Let us, therefore, hear what this learned historian says: "In those days, says Eusebius, (viz. in the days of Cerdo, Ignatius, and Simeon, of whom he had been speaking,) the Apostle John, the beloved disciple, was yet alive, inspecting the churches of Asia, having returned, after Domitian's death, from the island, whither he had been banished. Now, that John was then alive, it is enough to adduce the testimony of two persons of great authority, who are worthy of all belief, and were ever eminent for defending the truth; I mean, Ireneus and Clemens Alexandrinus; the first of whom, in his second book against heresies, speaks thus: All the presbyters, says Ireneus, who lived familiarly with the Apostle John, in Asia, do assure us, that they had this related to them from John himself; for he lived with them even unto the times of Trajan. In his third book, also, Ireneus gives us the same account, in these words: The church of Ephesus also, which was founded by the Apostle Paul, and was afterwards under the care of the Apostle John, until Trajan's time, is an eminent witness of what was delivered to us by the Apostle. And besides him, Clemens likewise, says Eusebius, does not only take notice at the same time, but gives a particular story relating to him, in that book of his, which bears this title, 'What rich man can be saved?'" And then Eusebius recites the

story at length, which were too long to insert here.

Now, if John lived to the days of Trajan, he must have been a prodigiously old man, according to Epiphanius, who says he was ninety years of age in Claudius's time. For, giving him all the allowance that can be desired, viz. that John was so old in the last year of Claudius, and that he died in the first year of Trajan, he must have been one hundred and thirty-four years old at least when he died: seeing Claudius died A. D. 54, and Trajan did not begin to reign until the year 98, though others say, with more probability, not until A. D. 100. Now, besides that it is not easy to believe, that so thoughtful and laborious a man should live so long, the improbability of what Epiphanius says, appears farther from this; that, if in the year 54 from Christ's birth John was ninety years of age, he must have been thirty-six years elder than Christ. And if so, it seems very odd, that Christ should say to him, from the cross, "Man, behold thy mother," and to Mary, "Woman, behold thy son." For, as this seems to say, that he was at least as young as Christ, this account makes him an old man of near seventy years of age at that time. Which, as it must suppose Mary to be a very aged person of between eighty and ninety at least, so it contradicts the constant and unanimous tradition of the church, which supposes him to be very young at that time. Whence Boronius says, that he was but twenty-five years old. And Nicephorus relates out of an epistle of Evodius, bishop of Antioch, that the virgin herself was not then fifty; seeing Christ, as he asserts, was born when she was but fifteen years old.

Whence it appears, how little we ought to trust Epiphanius, in opposition to all antiquity besides. Which made Drusus say, *scimus omnes Epiphanium in multis graviter hallucinatum.* And upon the same account Petavius scruples not to correct him: for where he has it *imperante Claudio*, he writes this short note in the margin, *mendose pro Domitiano.*

But the truth is, though I am not willing to detract from this author's credit, yet I suspect it was not so much an error of judgment as of will, or that which some call a *pia fraus*, that made him desert the tradition of the church in this matter. For his telling us this story is upon the occasion of an objection of the Montanists against the Apocalypse, taken from this supposition, that there was no church in Thyatira, when John wrote the Revelation; which it seems he thought would serve another turn, if he inverted it, by telling them that John said so only by way of prophecy. Whence he proceeds to prove the verity and divinity of the book; and therefore, thought his argument would be the more cogent, the farther he run up the date of the Revelation and John's being in Patmos. But as this was a poor as well as unlawful shift, so I shall leave him and his authority both to those who have more time and leisure to consider them farther.

For to me there is proof enough from the Revelation itself, to assure us, that it was written in Domitian's time. For it is plain not only from chap. i. v. 9, which I touched upon before, but from the strain of all the seven epistles which John writes to the churches of Asia, that at the time of his being in Patmos, or rather before, there had been a severe persecution upon them. Therefore, he tells the church of Ephesus, that she had laboured and endured, and had not fainted under the troubles that had come upon her. (chap. ii. v. 2.) And so the Christians of Smyrna are told of their tribulation, and exhorted not to fear imprisonment, or any other thing that they should suffer. (v. 9, 10.) This being added, that they must expect tribulation for ten days: which by the way is no inconsiderable hint; seeing the persecution of Domitian, from the first beginning of it, lasted about ten years, which in the dialect of St. John are called days. I might comment on many other things, but this is plain, that the church was under persecution every where at that time, if it were only from these and the like expressions, Be thou faithful unto the death; and to him that overcometh will I do so and so. And beside all these things, mention is made of an eminent martyr of the church of Pergamus, (chap. ii. v. 13,) whose name was Antipas. For the Apostle John, or rather Christ, is so express in relating this, that we may deny any thing in the Bible, if we deny this matter of fact. I am not concerned here with the allegories some fanciful men make upon this name, when they tell us that it signifies as much as Antipater or Antipapa: nor have I any thing to do with the stories that later authors tell us of him, as of his being bishop of Pergamus, and of his being burnt in a brazen bull, with other circumstantial matters relating to his person or death. Let Aretha, therefore, Metaphrastes, Cedrenus, Pererius, Surius, Baronius, Cornelius a Lapide, and a thousand more be supposed to mistake in their relating this story: yet no man shall ever make me disbelieve what St. John says of this matter. And I must have farther proof than ever I expect to receive, before I can believe that all these authors are mistaken as to the foundation of their relation; when they unanimously tell us, that this martyr suffered in the reign of Domitian.

And now I suppose I have said enough to prove that John was not in Patmos before the reign of Domitian. And if so, the foundation of Grotius, and his followers falls to the ground. So that these corollaries must naturally follow from what has been said, and remain as certain truths.

1. Corol. The visions of the Apocalypse relate neither to the Romish nor Jewish

state, before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

2. Corol. The Revelation relates to the church and her adversaries, as to those things that were to fall out after the eversion of the Jewish state.

Now, before I proceed, I must desire the reader to observe the distribution which Christ himself makes of the subjects treated of in this book, chap. i. 19, when he commands John, saying, Γραψον α ειδες, και α εισι, και α μελλει γενεσθαι μετα ταυτα; i. e., Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter: where it is plain three things are distinguished: 1. The things which John had seen, viz. the emblems, figures, or hieroglyphical representations that had been subjected to his eyes or imagination, (from v. 12 to v. 19.) Then, 2. The things which were existent and in being at the time when John was in Patmos, viz. the churches planted by the apostles, particularly the seven Asiatic ones, to which John had a peculiar relation, and to which he was ordered to direct seven epistles. And then, 3. The things which were to fall out hereafter, viz. the prophetical part of the book, beginning with the fourth chapter, as is plain from the first verse thereof. Where, after John had written what related to both the former heads, he tells us, that he heard a voice of a trumpet, talking with him, and commanding him now to begin and write the things which he was to show him, and represent to him emblematically, which were to be μετα ταυτα, after the expiration of the other things mentioned before, which were said then to exist, viz. the then present circumstances of the Asiatic churches.

So that this is a sufficient answer to those that object, that this book cannot be supposed to contain a prophecy of the state of the church for any long time, seeing it is said, that the things prophesied of in the Revelation must shortly come to pass. (chap. i. 1.) For seeing we have a double explication of this expression. (viz. chap. i. v. 19, and chap. iv. v. 1.) I ask, whether we are to stick so to the letter of the first short proposition, as to reject the explication given of it in the following places? It was very proper indeed, when some things in this book did concern the then present state of the church, and some other thing that did relate to the future condition of it, to say, (as in chap. i. v. 1.,) that the prophecy related to things that were shortly to come to pass: because not only were those things to be soon fulfilled that concerned the churches of Asia at that time; but the other things were then also to enter upon their begun accomplishment. But that we might not imagine that the whole of this book was to be accomplished shortly, we are told, (chap. i. v. 19, and chap. iv. v. 1,) that what related to future time, was to be accomplished and fall out afterwards. And that accordingly, we might see the full extent of this prophecy, we are led down from scene to scene, till we are brought down to the end and consummation of all things at last. And now, seeing we have proved that this book was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, we must desire our antagonists to find out something else, to which they can accommodate all the figures of the Revelation, before we quit our interpretation, merely because they dislike it, though they can offer us nothing in the room of the same. So that until they be able to enlighten our minds with another scheme than that of Grotius, which we have sufficiently, though briefly refuted, I must be bold to lay down this further corollary, which is the same with our first postulatum in the preceeding discourse.

3. Corol. That the Revelation contains the series of all the remarkable events and changes of the state of the Christian church to the end of the world.

And the same distribution of this book, into the three parts I have mentioned, lays a sufficient foundation for another proposition also.

Proposition III.—The seven Epistles directed to as many churches in the Lesser Asia, do not immediately relate to the Christian church in general, and therefore, cannot be interpreted prophetically, in any proper sense, as if they did denote so many periods of time in relation to it.

I might demonstrate this, were it needful, but seeing it makes nothing for my design, which way soever men understand it, I shall say nothing to it now; especially because the learned Witsius, my professor and master formerly, has sufficiently demonstrated what I assert in this proposition, in his *Diatribe de septem Epistolarum Apocalypticarum sensu Historico et Prophetico*, published in his *Miscellanea Sacra*.

And neither have I time to prove other propositions, that might appear more necessary: only seeing the key of interpreting the Apocalypse, which the angel gives John, (chap. xvii.,) is so very plain, I cannot but build another proposition upon it.

Proposition IV.—Babylon the great, or the apocalyptical beast, taken in a general sense, as it is represented with its seven heads, and ten horns, is no other than an emblem of the Roman empire.

For besides that, Dr. Cressener and others have proved this: the text itself is demonstration enough to all those that will be at pains attentively and impartially to consider it. For seeing the angel does expressly say, that by this was meant the seven-hilled city, (v. 9,) and the city that then did reign over the kings of the earth, (v. 18,) I cannot imagine what he could have said more plainly upon this head.

But seeing he represents the empire, under the peculiar consideration of its being governed by a woman, who is called the great whore, or adultress; therefore, this lays a foundation for another proposition.

Proposition V.—The seven-headed beast, more especially considered, as it is represented as rid upon by the whore, doth represent Rome to us as it is represented under the ecclesiastical government of the papacy, or apostate church of Rome,

This the angel does sufficiently insinuate, (chap. xvii. v. 8,) when he says, the beast which thou sawest, was, and yet is not at this time; *i. e.*, the beast which thou sawest, is indeed the same Roman empire which was before, and was represented to thee, (chap. xiii. v. 1;) but it is not yet, in another sense, viz. as now thou beholdest it under the rule of a whore, or the apostate church of Rome. For this last ecclesiastical form of government is not yet come, but it is to come, (when it ariseth,) out of the bottomless pit, in order to go thither again, into endless perdition.

And if this be once granted, then that will naturally follow, which I am to represent as another proposition.

Proposition VI.—The seven kings, represented by the seven heads of the beast, are no other than the seven forms of supreme government, that did successively obtain among the Romans.

This the angel doth likewise sufficiently insinuate, (v. 10,) which can never be understood of particular emperors, at least not of those Grotius fixed upon, whose opinion this way we have already refuted. And, therefore, seeing five of the forms of the Roman government were fallen in John's time, viz. kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes, (as Tacitus reckons them, Annal. lib. i, sect. 1,) and seeing the imperial authority was that which was in being then, we have no reason to quit so plain and exact an interpretation, until more be said against it, than ever has yet been produced to the world.

And were it not that I am confined so much now, both as to time, and lest this postscript should swell to an enormous bulk, I should not fear to attempt the demonstration of these last propositions, and to proceed to others that would lay a further and more strong foundation still, of that method of interpreting the Revelation, which the generality of Protestants are agreed in. But I hope I have said enough for this place, to secure the principles I go upon, by which the things which I proposed at first as *postulata* are, I think, sufficiently proved. And seeing my principal design in writing this postscript, was to refute the hypothesis that Grotius and Hammond go upon, I leave it to the candid and impartial thoughts of the reader, whether I have not said enough to prove it to be altogether precarious.

And now seeing every one must see how much I have been straitened, both as to time and paper, in this postscript, I hope the reader will put the more favourable construction on what defects he may observe in my performance, either as to matter, method, or the calculations of time, which I have run upon; in which, if there be any thing obscure or confused, the study of brevity and dispatch has occasioned it. But since I have advanced nothing in relation to future time, but by way of conjecture, nor indeed, asserted any thing (in relation to that part of the prophecy which is fulfilled,) dogmatically and positively, but only proposed my thoughts, after the manner of a rational probability; I suppose no man will think it worth his while to make a noise about little mistakes, that perhaps, I may have been guilty of through haste or inadvertency. But if any person shall take occasion from what I have said to study the Apocalypse to better advantage than I have attained to do, and shall give the world a better built, and more clearly connected scheme of the visions of this book; I assure him, that none shall more rejoice in such a performance than I; and I shall be one of the first to return him thanks for refuting me. For truth is all I seek after, and that it may ever, and in all respects prevail, is, and shall be my constant prayer and study.

In addition to what Mr. Fleming has said, the editor begs leave to subjoin the following explanation of the mark of the name of the beast, by the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman characters composing the mark of the name, in Revelation xiv. 11.

It was customary with the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, (or Romans,) to use the *letters of their alphabet*, to keep accounts by, instead of *figures*, which were of much later invention; the same ancient practice, in part, prevails to this day, according to the old Roman custom; as you may perceive on books, medals, monuments, or public buildings; for instance, MDCCXCIII. is put for 1793, which, in Hebrew characters, is thus decyphered, אאוצג, 1793; and in Greek, thus, ,αψιγ, 1793.

Now, the Holy Spirit knowing, that notwithstanding men and nations would change their customs and manners, by being overturned, yet still their numerical letters would remain in use to the latest posterity; he, therefore, in infinite wisdom, thought fit to describe the *mark* or *name* of the *popish beast*, by *numerical letters*, that thereby it might unalterably remain, and so not only appear both a *mark* and a *name*, but a *numerical name*, or a name distinguished by the coincidence of its numbers, viz. 666; which number being pointed out by a most remarkable circumstance happening in the corresponding century, it could not possibly be mistaken, forgotten, altered, or lost.

On these accounts, (among others,) no doubt the Holy Ghost gave the true *sign* or *mark* of the monster, in such cypherical characters as constitute the number 666, by a singular combination of the three languages; viz. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

Nor is it a little astonishing, that the sum

total of the number 666, without a unit over or under, should be found in the composition of the name, which has in it a combination of all those languages in which the beast wrote the inscription over our blessed Lord's head on the cross, viz. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

The sign or number given, whereby we are to find out the *mark* of the beast, is 666, which number, being applied to his name and character as man, a Roman, of the Latin nation, will be found exactly to make out the *mark* of his *name*, thus, רמענש, *Romanus*—λατεινος, *Latinus;* both which when viewed as letters, may be called the mark of his name, but when considered as *numerals* or *figures*, (of which both words entirely consist,) may then be called the *number of his name, or the number of a man*, being a Latin name derived from that of Romulus, a man, who founded Rome pagan, and so peculiar to a man, viz. the pope, who is the foundation of Rome papal, as the other was of Rome pagan.

Now, observe, the Hebrew and Greek letters composing the words, רומיית, *Romiith*—רמענוש, *Romanus*—or, λατεινος, *Latinus*, each of them making in numerals exactly 666—plainly point out not only his name and the number of his name, but also the *mark* of his *name;* as for example: in

ר ו מ י י ת *Romiith*, 666;
400 10 10 40 6 200

so likewise ר מ ע נ ו ש *Romanus*, 666;
300 6 50 70 40 200

—and also the Greek,

λ α τ ε ι ν ο ς *Latinus*, 666;
30 1 300 5 10 50 70 200

in each of which the exact mark is contained.

It, therefore, evidently appears, that each name is both a *mark* and a *number;* a *mark*, when viewed as made up of so many letters, therefore, called the *mark of his name;* a *number*, when viewed as made up of so many numerals, then called the *number of his name.* But when considered merely as a name derived from *Romiith*, a Roman, or *Romulus*, the founder of Rome, a name common among men, it may then properly be called the *mark of a man*, aye, of an uncommon man; in Scripture dialect, *a man of sin*, of uncommon sin.

I cannot leave this subject without remarking, how singular it is, that Christ should have suffered under a conjunction of these three powers, viz. the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins; and that his inscription was also written in all their three languages: farther, that Antichrist has also reigned in a conjunction of the same: and as his mark is likewise contained in a combination of them, may it not, therefore, according to the nature of correspondencies, be expected, that the visible destruction of the man of sin, and the establishment of Christ's reign, will be manifested in a conjunction of these three kindred, people, and tongues? So, that by the same instruments that Christ has been abased, and Antichrist exalted, Antichrist shall be abased, and Christ alone exalted.

FRONTLET OF THE BEAST.

It is to be observed, as a singular circumstance, that the title VICARIVS FILII DEI (*Vicar of the Son of God,*) which the popes of Rome have assumed to themselves, and caused to be inscribed over the door of the Vatican, exactly makes the number 666, when dechyphered according to the numeral signification of its constituent letters. Thus,

Vicar — *of the Son* — *of God.*
V I C A R I V S F I L I I D E I
5 1 100 1 5 1 50 1 1 500 1

Added altogether thus:

Vicar	V	5
	I	1
	C	100
	A	0
	R	0
	I	1
	V	5
	S	0
of the Son	F	0
	I	1
	L	50
	I	1
	I	1
of God.	D	500
	E	0
	I	1
The number of the beast		666

N. B. It may be farther observed, that not many centuries back, on the *front* of the POPE'S MITRE, the word MYSTERY used to be inscribed, and was worn by them till the reformers discovered and pointed it out to the people, as the Scripture mark of Antichrist, from Rev. xvii. 5, which glaring manifestation of the man of sin so opened the eyes of the multitude, that the custom was immediately abolished, and the word erased from the mitre.

NUMBER OF THE BEAST COUNTED.

Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast.—*Rev.* xiii. 18.

We are here directed to count his number, as we were before to examine his mark.

The counting of his number seems intended to discover his duration, as decyphering his mark does to show his character, or the copy of his countenance; for mark indicates character, as number does duration.

Therefore, it is said, "Here is wisdom! (or herein) let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast."

On this occasion, therefore, we are no more to regard the characters as letters, but as numerals; they are, says the text, 666. We are now commanded simply to count, and in counting, we shall find three figures, viz. 6, 6, 6; and the number of these three, when counted, amounts to just 18.

This I conceive to be the meaning of the direction for counting the number of the beast.

And what is this to hold forth, but undoubtedly to discover to us the duration of the monster, that, whereas, his establishment took place six centuries after Christ, so his destruction shall be accomplished eighteen centuries after Christ.

NUMERAL LETTERS, FORMERLY USED BY THE NATIONS OF THE

Latins,		*Greeks,*		*and Hebrews.*	
M	1000	α	1	א	1
D	500	β	2	ב	2
C	100	γ	3	ג	3
L	50	δ	4	ד	4
X	10	ε	5	ה	5
V	5	ϛ	6	ו	6
I	1	ζ	7	ז	7
		η	8	ח	8
		θ	9	ט	9
		ι	10	י	10
		κ	20	כ	20
		λ	30	ל	30
		μ	40	מ	40
		ν	50	נ	50
		ξ	60	ס	60
		ο	70	ע	70
		π	80	פ	80
		ϟ	90	צ	90
		ρ	100	ק	100
		σ	200	ר	200
		τ	300	ש	300
		υ	400	ת	400
		φ	500		
		χ	600		
		ψ	700		
		ω	800		
		ϡ	900		
		α	1000		
		β	2000		
		γ	3000		
		δ	4000		
		ε	5000		
		ϛ	10,000		
		ζ	20,000		
		ϛ	100,000		
		σ	200,000		

FINALS.

ך	500
ם	600
ן	700
ף	800
ץ	900
ת	1000
ן	2000

Even those who are unacquainted with the languages may, by comparing the characters and numbers, satisfy themselves of the truth of the foregoing assertions.

ANSWER TO A QUERIST, RESPECTING THE MARK OF THE BEAST.

Sir,—In answer to your observation and queries, permit me to say, the things I have asserted are stubborn, clear facts, not mere suppositions or fancies.

The inscription in question was actually written over the door of the Vatican of Rome, in express Latin words and characters, as inserted in this publication, viz. VICARIVS FILII DEI; and those Latin words and characters contain Latin numerals to the amount of 666, exactly corresponding with the number of the beast.

With respect to the supposition you have conjured up that the pope might be called *Vicarius Christus*, or *Vicarius Christus Filii Dei*, (a sort of gibberish that is neither Latin, German, nor English,) it is a matter I have nothing to do with. Mr. D—, may adopt these or any other fancies to amuse himself, and to screen the head of his holiness; but when he has done all, this question will still remain to be answered: Have those inscriptions ever appeared over the door of the Vatican at Rome?

As to Mr. D—'s attempting to obscure the number of the beast, 666, contained in the numerals of the words VICARIVS FILII DEI, by objecting to a V, however the pope or his emissaries may be obliged to him for his kind exertions on their behalf, yet I presume, neither of them will condescend to appear his humble fool in Latin, for the sake of sheltering themselves under his ignorance of the Latin alphabet and of ancient inscriptions.

Let Mr. D—, but put his hand into his pocket, and examine a common half-penny, he will then see, that a whole nation have unanimously adopted that practice which Mr. D—'s wisdom cannot discover the propriety of, viz. retaining the use of the ancient Latin V, in preference to the U, as he will find by the inscription, viz. GEORGIVS not GEORGIUS.

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS EMINENT WRITERS, CHIEFLY RESPECTING THE FALL OF POPERY

ARCHBISHOP BROWN, 1551.

"THERE is a new fraternity who lately sprung up, who call themselves Jesuists which will deceive many, who are much after the scribes' and pharisees' manner, amongst the Jews; they shall strive to abolish the truth, and shall come very near to do it; for these sorts will turn themselves into several forms, with the heathen an heathenist, with the atheists an atheist, with Jews a Jew, and with the reformers a reformade, purposely to know your intentions, your minds, your hearts, and your inclinations, and thereby bring you at last to be like the fool that 'said in his heart, there is no God.' These shall spread over the whole world, shall be admitted into the councils of princes, and they never the wiser; charming of them; yea, making your princes reveal their hearts, and the secrets therein unto them, and yet they not perceive it, which will happen from falling from the law of God, and by winking at their sins; yet in the end, God, to justify his law, shall suddenly cut off this society, even by the hands of those who have most succoured them and made use of them; so that at the end they shall become odious to all nations, they shall be worse than Jews, having no resting place upon earth."

REV. JOHN KNOX, 1572.

"Sentence is pronounced in Scotland against that murderer, the king of France, and God's vengeance shall never depart from it, nor his house, but his name shall remain an execration to posterity; and none that shall come of his loins, shall enjoy that kingdom in peace and quietness, unless repentance prevents God's judgment." The French Ambassador, being told the prediction, applied to the regent and council for an interdiction, but was refused. See his life.

DR. J. OWEN, 1649.

The Lord Jesus Christ, by his mighty power, in these latter days, as antichristian tyranny draws to its period, will so far *shake and translate the political heights, governments, and strength of the nations*, as shall serve for the full bringing in of his own peaceable kingdom; the nations so shaken becoming thereby a quiet habitation for the people of the Most High.

See that punctual description which you have of this whole matter, as Daniel calls it in the Revelation, with respect unto its accomplishment. (chap. xvii.) The Roman harlot having procured the ten kings, or kingdoms, into which the last head of the Roman empire sprouted, about the year 450, by the inundation of the northern nations to join with her, they together make war against the Lamb. (v. 12, 13, 14.)

Ver, 12. "The horns which thou sawest" (upon the last head of the great beast, the Roman monarchy,) are "ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet," (to wit: when John saw the vision,) "but received power as kings one hour with the beast." (About four hundred years after this, the pope ascended to his sovereignty, and these western nations grew into distinct dominions about the same time.)

Ver. 13. "These have one mind," (that is, as to the business in hand, for otherwise they did and do vex one another with perpetual broils and wars,) "and shall give their power and strength to the beast, (or swear to defend the rights of holy church, which is no other than Babylon,) and act accordingly."

Ver. 14. "These make war with the Lamb," (having sworn and undertaken the defence of holy church, or Babylon, they persecuted the poor heretics with fire and sword;) that is, the witnesses of the Lamb, and in them the Lamb himself, (striving to keep his kingdom out of the world,) and the "Lamb shall overcome them," shaking and translating them into a new mould and frame: "For he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him" (whose help and endeavours he will use,) "are called, and chosen, and faithful."

Ver. 16. "The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast," (being now shaken, changed and translated in mind, interest, and perhaps government,) "these hate the whore, and shall make her desolate," (are instrumental, in the hand of Christ, for the ruin of that antichristian state, which before they served,) "and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

Hence, (chap. xviii. 2,) Babylon, and that whole antichristian state, which was supported upon their power and greatness, having lost its props, comes topling down to the ground: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen," (v. 2,) and the saints take vengeance on the whore for all her former rage and cruelty. "Double unto her double, according to her works." (v. 6.)

Ver. 9. "And the kings of the earth, (being some of them shaken out of their dominion, for refusing to close with the Lamb,)

who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, (learning and practising false worship of her institution,) shall bewail her, and lament for her, (as having received succour from her, her monasteries and shavelings, in their distress, whereunto they were brought for her sake,) when they shall see the smoke of her burning, (beholding her darkness, stink and confusion, in her final desolation.)

"Now all this shall be transacted with so much obscurity and darkness," Christ not openly appearing to carnal eyes, that though "many shall be purified and made white, yet the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (Dan. xii. 10.) There shall be no such demonstration of the presence of Christ, as to open the eyes of hardened men; but, at length, having suffered the poor deceived wretches to drink of the cup prepared for them, he appears himself gloriously, (chap. xix. 13,) in a more eminent manner than ever before, to the total destruction of the residue of opposers. And that this will be the utmost close of that dispensation wherein now he walketh, I no way doubt."

The assertion being cleared and proved, the reasons of it come next to be considered: and the first is, that

Reason 1.—*"It shall be done by the way of recompense and vengeance." "It is the great day of the wrath of the Lamb." (Rev. vi. 17.) "The land shall be *soaked with blood*, and the dust made fat with fatness; for it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion." (Isa. xxxiv. 7, 8.) "The day of vengeance is in his heart, when the year of his redeemed is come." (Isa. lxiii. 4.)

"The kings of the earth have given their power to Antichrist, endeavouring to the utmost to keep the kingdom of christ out of the world. What, I pray, hath been their main business for seven hundred years and upwards, even almost ever since the man of sin was enthroned? How have they earned the titles, eldest son of the Church; the catholic and most Christian king, defender of the faith, and the like? Hath it not been by the blood of saints? Is there not in every one of these kingdoms, the slain and the banished ones of Christ to answer for? In particular,

"Hath not the blood of the saints of Jesus, (eclipsed by Antichrist and his adherents,) Wickliffs and Lollards, cried from the ground for vengeance upon the English heaven and earth, for a long season? Did not their bodies lie in the streets of France under the name of Waldenses, Albigenses, and poor men of Lyons? Hath not Germany, and the annexed territories, her *Husse*, and *Hussite*, *Hierom*, and *Subutraguians* to answer for? Is NOT SPAIN'S INQUISITION ENOUGH TO RUIN A WORLD, MUCH MORE A KINGDOM?† Have not all these, and all the kingdoms round about, washed their hands and garments in the blood of thousands of Protestants? And do not the kings of all these nations as yet stand up in the room of their progenitors, with the same implacable enmity to the power of the gospel? Show me seven kings that ever yet laboured sincerely to enhance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, and dare boldly say, *Octavus quis fuerit nondum constat*. And is there not a cry for all this, "How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that live on the earth? (Rev. vi. 10.) Doth not Sion cry, The violence done to me and my flesh be upon Babylon, and my blood upon those heavens of the nations? And will not the Lord avenge his elect that cry unto him day and night? Will he not do it speedily, will he not call the *fowls of heaven* to eat the flesh of *kings* and *captains*, and great men of the earth? (Rev. xix. 18.) Will he not make these heavens like the wood of the vine, not a pin to be taken of them to hang a garment on, in his whole tabernacle?"

The time shall come wherein the earth shall disclose her slain, and not the simplest heretic, as they were counted, shall have his blood unrevenged: neither shall any atonement be made for this blood, or expiation be allowed, while a toe of the image, or a bone of the beast is left unbroken.

Reason 2.—That by his own wisdom he may frame such a power as may best conduce to the carrying on of his own kingdom among the sons of men. (Psal. ii. 9, 10, 11, 12. Rev. xvii. 14. Matt. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 26. Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 13, 14. Psal. xlv. 16. Isa. xlix. 7, 23.

He hath promised his church, that he will give unto it holy priests and Levites, (Isa. lxvi. 20, 21,) which shall serve at the 'great feast of tabernacles.' Zech. xiv. 16.) A sufficient demonstration that he will dwell still in his churches by his ordinances, whatsoever some conceive; so also, "that he will make her civil officers peace, and her exactors righteousness." (Isa. lx. 17, 18.) They shall be so established, that the nations, as nations, may serve it; and the "kingdoms of the world, shall become the kingdoms of our Lord." (Rev. xi. 15.)

For the present, the government of the nations (as many of them as are concerned therein) is purely framed for the interest of Antichrist. No king or government in Europe, or line of governors so ancient, but that the beast is as old as they, and had a great influence into their *constitution* or *establishment*, to provide that it might be for his own interest.

I believe it will be found a difficult task, to name any of the kingdoms of Europe (excepting only that remotest northward) in the setting up and establishment whereof, either

* Psal. ii. 4, 5; cxxxvii. 8, 9. Isa. xlvii. 1, 2, 3; xlix. 26. Jer. l. 33, 34; li. 24, 25, 34, 35. Zech. xii. 2, 3, 4; xiv. 12. Rev. xviii. 6, &c

† The tremendous conflict now carrying on in Spain, may be considered as a sort of retaliation on that nation for its cruelties to the Protests-

as to persons or government, the pope had not expressly bargained for his own interest, and provided that that should have the chiefest place in all the oaths and bonds that were between princes and people.

Bellarmine, to prove that the pope hath a temporal power indirectly over all kings and nations, (if he mean by indirectly, gotten by indirect means, it is actually true, as to too many of them,) gives sundry instances in most of the most eminent nations in Europe, how he hath actually exercised such a power for his own interest.

There have been two most famous and remarkable changes of the government of these nations, and into both of them what an influence the pope had is easily perceivable.

The first was between the years 400 and 500 after Christ, (2 Thess. ii. 6, 7,) when the Roman empire of the west, that which withheld the 'man of sin' from acting his part to the life, was shivered to pieces by many barbarous nations, (Dan. ii. 41;) who setting themselves in the fruitful soils of Europe, began to plant their heavens and lay the foundations of their earth, growing up into civil states; for the most part appointing them to be their kings in peace, who had been their leaders in war.

This furious inundation settled the Franches in Gaul, the Saxons in England, the West Goths in Spain, the East Goths and Longobards into Italy, and set up the Almans in Germany; from some whereof, though for divers years the papal world was exceedingly tormented, and Rome itself sacked; yet in the close and making up of their government, changing their manners and religion, they all submitted to the usurpation of the man of sin. (Rev. xvii. 13.) So that in all their windings up, there was a salve for him and his authority.

The second great alteration took up a long space, and was in action about three hundred years, reckoning it from the translation of the French crown, from Childeric IV. unto Pepin and his son Charles, by papal authority, unto the conquest of England by the Normans; in which space, the line of Charles in France was again, by the same authority, and the power of Hugh Capet, cut off; no state in Europe, the choice patrimony of the beast, that did not receive a signal alteration in this space: nor was there any alteration, but that the pope had a hand in every one of them; and, either by pretended collations of right, to pacify the consciences of blood-thirsty potentates, in the undertaking and pursuing their unjust conquests, or foolish mitred confirmations of sword purchases, he got them all framed to his own end and purpose, which was to bring all these nations into subjection to his Babylonish usurpations; which their kings finding no way inconsistent with their own designs, did willingly promote, labouring to enforce all consciences into subjection to the Roman

Hence it is, as I observed before, that such an interposition was made of the rights of holy church; that is, Babylon, the mother of fornications, (Rev. xiii. 15, 16,) in all the ties, oaths, and bonds between princes and people. And for the advancement of the righteous judgments of God, that the sons of men may learn to fear and tremble before him. It may be observed, that that which doth and shall stick upon potentates to their ruin, is not so much their own or any other interest, as the very dregs of the papal antichristian interest, thrust into their oaths and obligations, for no end in the world, but to keep the Lord Jesus out of his throne. (2 Thess. ii. 11.)

This is a second reason why the Lord Jesus, by his mighty power, at the bringing in of his immoveable kingdom, "will shake the heavens and the earth of the nations;" even because, in their present constitution, they are directly framed to the interest of Antichrist, which, by notable advantages at their first moulding, and continued insinuations ever since, hath so rivetted itself into the very fundamentals of them, that no digging or mining with an *earthquake*, will cast up the foundation stones thereof. The Lord Jesus then having promised the service of the nations to his church, will so far open their whole frame to the roots, *as to pluck out all the cursed seeds of the 'mystery of iniquity,' which, by the craft of Satan, and exigencies of state, or methods of advancing the pride and power of some sons of blood, have been sown among them.*

Reason 3.—Because as is their interest, so is their acting. The present power of the nations, stand in direct opposition to the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ. Two things there are which confessedly are incumbent on him in this day of his advancement.

1. The bringing home of his ancient people, to be one fold with the fulness of the Gentiles; raising up the tabernacle of David, and building it as in the days of old. (John x. 16. Isa. xxxvii. 31. Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. Amos ix. 11;) in the accomplishment of innumerable promises, and answer to millions of prayers put up at the throne of grace, for this very glory in all generations. Now, there be two main hindrances of this work, that must be removed; the first whereof, is,

Reason 1.—The *great river Euphrates*, the strength and fulness of whose streams doth yet rage so high that there is no passage for the kings of the east to come over. (Exod. xiv. 21, 22. Josh. iii. 15, 16. Hab. iii. 8,) wherefore, this must be dried up as other waters were for their forefathers in days of old. (Rev. xvi. 12.) Doubtless, this is spoken in allusion to Abraham's coming over that river into Canaan, when the church of God in his family was there to be erected; whence he was called the Hebrew; that is, the passenger, to wit, over that river, (Gen. xiv. 13,) and then it may well enough

denote the Turkish power, which, proud as it is at this day, possessing in peace all those regions of the East, yet God can quickly make it wither and be dried up: Or, to the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon, when it was taken and destroyed by the drying up of the streams of that river; and so the yoke of her tyranny broken from the church's neck, (Jer. li. 31, 32,) and so it can be no other but the power of the Romish Babylon, supported by the kings of the nations, which must, therefore, be shaken and dried up.

2. *Moral*, or the idolatry of the Gentile worshippers. The Jews stick hard as yet at this, that God should abolish any kind of worship which himself had once instituted. (Rev. ix. 2.) But that he should ever accept any false worship, which he had once strictly prohibited, and no where to this day appointed, to this they will never be reconciled. Now, such is all the invented idolatrous worship which the kings of the earth have sucked in, from the cup of fornication held out to them in the hand, and by the authority of the *Roman whore;* this still they cleave close unto, and will not hearken "to the angel preaching the everlasting gospel, that men should worship him who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Rev. xiii. 6, 7,) that is, the God of heaven in Jesus Christ in opposition to their *Iconolatry, Artolatry, Hagiolatry, Staurolatry,* and *Mass-abominations.* This then, must also be removed; and because, as you saw before, it is so riveted and cemented into, and with all the orbs of the nations, *heaven and earth,* they must be shaken and brought *metathesis,* before it can be effected.

3. The second thing he hath to accomplish is, the tremendous, total destruction of Babylon. (Ps. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Isa. xlvii. 7, 8, 9,) the man of sin and all his adherents, that are not obedient to the heavenly call. (Rev. xviii. 4. Jer. li. 25, 26. Rev. xvii. 1, 2. Zech. ii. 7. Jer. li. 6. Judg. xvi. 28, 29.) Now, as Sampson, intending the destruction of the princes, lords, and residue of the Philistines, who were gathered together in their idol temple, he effected it by pulling away the pillars whereby the buildidg was supported, whereupon, the whole frame topled to the ground, so the Lord, intending the ruin of that mighty power, whose top seems to reach to heaven, will do it by pulling away the pillars and supporters of it, after which it cannot stand one moment. Now, what are the pillars of that fatal building? Are they not the powers of the world, as at present stated and framed? Pull them away, and alas! what is Antichrist? It is the glory of the kings put upon her, that makes men's eyes to dazzle on the *Roman harlot.* Otherwise, she is but like the Egyptian deities, whose silly worshippers, through many glorious portals and frontispieces, were led to adore the image of an ugly ape.

Add hereunto, that in this mighty work, the Lord Jesus Christ will make use of the power of the nations, the horns of them; that is, their strength, (Rev. xvii. 16;) they must hate the whore and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. Now, whether this can be accomplished or no in their present posture, is easily discernible. Doth not the papal interest lie at the bottom of all for the most ruling lines of *Christendom?* Can that be ejected, without unbottoming their own dominion? Do they not use the efficacy of the Roman jurisdiction, to balance the powers of their adversaries abroad, and to awe their subjects at home? Hath not the pope a considerable strength in every one of their own bosoms? Are not the locusts of their religious orders all sworn slaves to him for number sufficient to make an army to fight the greatest emperor in the world? Are not most potentates tied by oath, or other compact, to maintain either the whole, or some part of the old tower, under the name of rights of holy church, prelates, and the like? And can any expect that such as these should take up the despised quarrel of the saints, against that flourishing queen? Doubtless, no such fruit will grow on these trees before they are thoroughly shaken.

Reason 4.—That his own people, seeing all earthly things shaking and removing, may be raised up to the laying hold of that durable kingdom that shall not be removed. (Heb. xii. 28.) All carnal interests will doubtless be shaken with that of Babylon. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) Many of God's people are not yet weaned from the things that are seen; no sooner is one carnal form shaken out, but they are ready to cleave to another: yea, to warm themselves in the feathered nest of unclean birds. All fleshly dominions within doors, and all civil dominion that opposeth without doors, shall be shaken. Now, these things are so glued also to men's earthly possessions, the talons of the birds of prey having firmly seized on them, that they also must be shaken with them; and therefore, from them also will he have us to be loosed. (2 Pet. iii. 12, 13.)

And these are some of the reasons of the position laid down, which is so bottomed, so proved, as you have heard. Of the speedy accomplishment of all this, I no way doubt. "I believe, and therefore, I have spoken." Whether I shall see any farther perfection of this work while I am here below, I am no way solicitous; being assured, that if I fail of it here, I shall, through the grace of him who loved us, and gave himself for us, meet with the treasures of it elsewhere.—*Vide his Sermon before the Parliament on the Shaking and Translating of Heaven and Earth.*

CHRISTOPHER LOVE, 1651.

A few nights after he was sentenced to be beheaded on Tower Hill, which was on the 22d day of August, 1652, ten days before his appointed time, by the sentence he

received at the bar, being one night visited by two of his intimate acquaintances, or bosom friends, as he himself called them, they began to complain of the cruelties of the times, and the malice and usage of time-serving brethren; to which Mr. Love answered, "And think you this is an evil time? No, no; this is the very time when grace and true godliness can be distinguished from hypocrisy: many have followed Christ hitherto for the loaves, and are now turned back for the roughness of the way, and the sore trial and tribulation which others met with who are gone before them.

"O England! thou shalt wax old in wickedness; thy sins abound like those of Sodom: thy voluptuousness shall cry aloud for vengeance; the Lord shall threaten and chastise thee, yet in mercy and love will he look upon those that fear him, and call upon his name; he will spare and save them alive in the days of his anger, when the wicked shall be sifted from amongst us, as the chaff is sifted from amongst the wheat; for out of thee, O England! shall a bright star arise, whose voice and light shall make the heathen to quake, and knock under with submission to the gospel of Jesus; he shall be as a sound of thunder in the ears of the wicked, and as a lantern to the Jews, to lead them to the knowledge of Jesus, the only Son of God, and true Messiah, whom they so long mistrusted; for the short work spoken of by the apostle, which the Lord is to make upon the earth, in the latter age of the world, cannot be far off. Observe, my dear friends, while you live, my calculation of the dates in the book of the Revelation, and in Daniel, which the Spirit of the Lord led me into; for the Lord will reveal it to some of his own ere that time come; for the nearer the time is, the seals shall be taken away, and more and more shall be revealed to God's people; for the Lord doth nothing without he reveals it, by the Spirit, to his servants the prophets: he destroyed not the whole world without the knowledge of Noah; he did not overthrow Sodom and Gomorrah without the knowledge of Abraham. I do not mean, now, that any new prophet shall arise; but the Lord, by his Spirit, shall cause knowledge to abound among his people, whereby the old prophecies shall be clearly and perfectly understood. And I die in that thought; and really believe that my calculation on the Revelation by St. John, and the prophecy which St. Jerome copied off, and translated out of the Hebrew language, as it is written on Seth's pillar in Damascus, which pillar is said to have stood since before the flood, and was built by Seth, Adam's son, and written by Enoch the prophet; as likewise the holy precepts, whereby the patriarch walked before the law was given to Moses, which were also engraven on the said pillar, whereof many Jews have copies, in their own language, written on parchment, and engraven on brass and copper; but the alteration of the date makes them to stagger at it, not knowing that the dates were to be altered by the birth of Christ. First, this prophecy is entitled, "A Short Work of the Lord's in the latter Age of the World."

"Great earthquakes and commotions, by the sea and land, shall come in the year of God 1779. Great wars in Germany and America in 1780. The destruction of popery, or Babylon's fall, in the year 1790. God will be known by many in 1795. This will produce a great man. Africa, Asia, and America, will tremble in 1803. Great commotions over all the world in 1805. God will be universally known by all: then, general reformation and peace forever, when the people shall learn war no more. Happy is the man that liveth to see this day!"

ARCHBISHOP USHER, 1655.

"The greatest stroke upon the reformed churches is yet to come: and the time of the utter ruin of the See of Rome shall be when she thinks herself most secure." One presumed to inquire of him, what his present apprehensions were concerning a very great persecution. He answered, "that a sad persecution would fall upon all the Protestant churches in Europe:" adding, "I tell you, all you have yet seen hath been but the beginning of sorrows, to what is yet to come upon the Protestant churches of Christ, who will, ere long, fall under a sharper persecution than ever; therefore, (said he,) look you be not found in the outward court, but a worshipper in the temple before the altar; for Christ will measure all those that profess his name, and call themselves his people; and the outward worshippers he will leave out to be trodden down by the Gentiles; the outward court is the formal Christians, whose religion lies in performing the outward duties of Christianity, without having an inward life and power of faith uniting them to Christ, and these God will leave to be trodden down, and swept away by the Gentiles; but the worshippers within the temple, and before the altar, God will hide in the hollow of his hand, and under the shadow of his wings. And this shall be one great difference between this last, and all the other preceding persecutions: for, in the former, the most eminent and spiritual ministers and Christians did generally suffer most, and were most violently fallen upon; but, in this last persecution, these shall be preserved by God, as a seed to partake of that glory which shall immediately follow, and come upon the church, as soon as ever this storm shall be over; for, as it shall be the sharpest, so it shall be the shortest persecution of them all; and shall only take away the gross hypocrites and formal professors, but the true spiritual believers shall be preserved till the calamity be over."

DR. H. MORE, 1663.

On the *mystery of iniquity* contained in the kingdom of Antichrist.

An earthquake signifies political commotions and change of affairs, is obvious to any one to note; and that whore of Babylon is nothing but the body of the idolatrous clergy in the empire, who appertain to the seventh or last head of the beast, which is an head of blasphemy, as well as the six first, that is to say, an idolatrous head. Whence we may understand what is meant by these seven thousand names of men, for neither seven nor thousand signify any determinate number, but only the nature or property of these names of men that are said to be slain, namely, that they are titles, dignities, officers, or orders, of men belonging to the state of Christendom.

PETER JURIEU, 1687.

And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand, and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to God.—*Rev.* xi. 13.

Now, what is this tenth part of this city, which shall fall? In my opinion, we cannot doubt that it is France. This kingdom is the most considerable part or piece of the horns, or states, which once made up the great Babylonian city: it fell—this does not signify that the French monarchy shall be ruined; it may be humbled; but in all appearance, Providence does design great elevation for her afterward. It is highly probable, that God will not let go unpunished the horrible outrages which it acts at this day. Afterward, it must build its greatness upon the ruins of the papal empire,* and enrich itself with the spoils of those who shall take part with the papacy. They who at this day persecute the Protestants, know not whither God is leading them. This is not the way by which he will lead France to the height of glory. If she comes thither, it is because she shall shortly change her road. Her greatening will be no damage to Protestant states; on the contrary, the Protestant states shall be enriched with the spoils of others; and be strengthened by the fall of Antichrist's empire. This tenth part of the city shall fall, with respect to the papacy; it shall break with Rome, and the Roman religion. One thing is certain, that the Babylonian empire shall perish through the refusal of obedience by the ten kings, who had given their power to the beast. The thing is already come to pass in part. The kingdoms of Sweden, Denmark, England, and several sovereign states in Germany, have withdrawn themselves from the jurisdiction of the pope. They have eaten her flesh, *i. e.*, seized on her benefices, and revenues, which she had in their countries. This must go on, and be finished as it is begun. The kings who yet remain under the empire of Rome, must break with her, leave her solitary and desolate.

But who must begin this last revolt? It is most probable that France shall. Not Spain, which as yet is plunged in superstition, and is as much under the tyranny of the clergy as ever. Nor the Emperor, who in temporals is subject to the pope, and permits that in his states the archbishop of Strigonium should teach that the pope can take away the imperial crown from him. It cannot be any country but France, which a long time ago hath begun to shake off the yoke of Rome. It is well known how solemnly and openly war hath been declared against the pope, by a declaration of the king, (ratified in all the Parliaments,) by the decisions of the assembly of the French clergy, by a disputation against the authority of the pope, managed in the Sorbon, solemnly, and by order of the court. And to heighten the affront, the theses were posted up, even upon the gates of his Nuncio. Nothing of this kind had hitherto happened, at least in time of peace, and unless the pope had given occasion by his insolence.

Besides this, superstition and idolatry lose their credit much in France. There is a secret party, though well enough known, which greatly despiseth the popular devotions, images, worship of saints, and is convinced that these are human inventions; God is before hand preparing for this great work.

To this it may be objected, that for the last hundred and fifty years, the pope's empire hath not been made up of ten kings, because the kings of England, Sweden, Denmark, &c., have thrown off his government, and consequently, France is not at this day the tenth part of the Babylonian empire; for it is more than a tenth part of it. But this is no difficulty; for we must know, that things retain the names which they bore in their original (without regarding the alterations which time does bring along.) Though at this day there are not ten kingdoms under the Babylonian empire, it is notwithstanding certain, that each kingdom was called, and ought to be called in this prophecy, the tenth part, because the prophet having described this empire in its beginning, by its ten horns, or ten kings, it is necessary for our clear understanding, that every one of these ten kings, and kingdoms should be called one of the ten kings, or of the ten kingdoms, with respect to the original constitution of the antichristian empire.

Seeing the tenth part of the city that must fall, is France, this gives me some hopes that the death of the two witnesses hath a particular relation to this kingdom. It is the street or place of this city, *i. e.*, the most fair and eminent part of it. The witnesses must remain dead upon this street, and upon it they must be raised again. And as the death of the witnesses and their resur-

* How wonderfully has this been accomplished, and is now accomplishing by Bonaparte.

rection have a relation to the kingdom of France, it may well fall out, that we may not be far distant from the time of the resurrection of the witnesses, seeing the three years and a half of their death are either begun, or will begin shortly.

And in the earthquake were slain seven thousand; in the Greek it is seven thousand names of men, and not seven thousand men. I confess, that this seems somewhat mysterious: in other places we find not this phrase, names of men, put simply for men. Perhaps, there is here a figure of grammar called hypallage casus, so that names of men are put for men of name, *i. e.*, of raised and considerable quality, be it on the account of riches, or of dignity, or of learning. But I am more inclined to say, that here these words, names of men, must be taken in their natural signification, and do intimate, that the total reformation of France shall not be made with bloodshed, nothing shall be destroyed but names; such as are the names of monks, of Carmelites, of Augustines, of Dominicans, of Jacobins, of Franciscans, Capuchins, Jesuits, Minimes, and an infinite company of others, whose number it is not easy to define, and which the Holy Ghost denotes by the number seven, which is the number of perfection, to signify that the orders of monks and nuns shall perish forever. This is an institution so degenerated from its first original, that it is become the arm of Antichrist. These orders cannot perish one without another.

The beast and the false prophets, the pope and his agents, shall sally all their forces, but God shall muster all his together, and give the last blow to popery; then the beast and the false prophet shall be thrown into the lake and plunged into the bottomless pit; Babylon shall wholly fall, and it shall be said, she is fallen! she is fallen!

These great events deserve to be distinguished from all others; for they have changed, or shall change the WHOLE FACE OF THE WORLD.

DR. GOODWIN, 1630.

Dr. Goodwin, who wrote a hundred and fifty years since, in his exposition upon the Revelation, (Part. 1, chap. 7,) has a great deal which is as astonishing as it is apposite to the present argument. He says, (Sect. 6,) "The saints and churches of France, God has made a wonder to me in all his proceedings towards them first and last; and there would seem some great and special honor reserved for them yet at the last; for it is certain, that the first light of the gospel, by that first and second angel's preaching, in chapter the fourteenth, (which laid the foundation of Antichrist's ruin,) was out from among them, and they bore and underwent the great heat of that morning of persecution, which was as great, if not greater, than any since. And so, as that kingdom had the first great stroke, so now the ruin of it should have the honor of having the last great stroke in the ruin of Rome."

Sect. 5th, he says, (on Rev. xi,) "By the earthquake here is meant a great concussion or shaking of states, political or ecclesiastical. The effect of this earthquake, and fall of this tenth part of the city, is killing *seven thousand of the names of men.* Now, by men of name, in Scripture, is meant men of title, office, and dignity. As in the case of Corah's conspiracy, so here a civil punishment falls upon these. For having killed these witnesses, themselves are to be killed (haply,) by being bereft of their names and titles, which are to be rooted out forever, and condemned to perpetual forgetfulness."

The singular agreement of present events with what these authors foretold from the prophecies, so many years ago, is a circumstance which merits the serious attention of all wise and considerate men; for it certainly adds great weight to the conjecture, that what has taken place in France, is the beginning of the final downfall of the papal usurpations and tyrannies. And if it should be so, wo be to them who attempt to uphold what God has willed to fall! In the ordinary wars which nations have waged, they have, perhaps, lost one or two hundred thousand lives, and slaughtered as many of their enemies; countries have been laid waste, and taxes incurred, to the oppression of the industrious; but in other respects they have sat down much as they were: but if the present contest be what there is reason to suspect it, not merely a war of man against man, but of God against antichristian usurpation and oppressions, the issue to those who oppose his designs must be different. Though, as was the case with the Assyrians, and with Cyrus, (Isa. x. 5, 7,) the instruments which he uses may not *know* him, or *mean* to fulfil his will, (Isa. xlv, 4,) yet they may be the rod of his anger to accomplish his councils.

Let us now revert to the question, What are to be the consequences of the resurrection of the witnesses? Soon after it, the seventh trumpet is to sound, which is the signal for the seven angels to pour out their vials of God's wrath upon the antichristian kingdom. Has this seventh trumpet been blown? Is it sounding? Or is it about to sound for the angels to prepare to execute the vengeance of God, on the mother of harlots and all abominations? My heart trembles at the idea of those calamities which are to sweep the earth, and of those convulsions which shall shake kingdoms and nations! "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain! At thy wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide thine indignation. (Jer. x. 7, 10.)

As to the gathering of the harvest and vintage in the fourteenth chapter, the time seems not yet come for their elucidation. I am inclined to think, that they properly fall

under one or more of the vials. The latter, as Dr. Goodwin has explained it, seems to be a vision of the vengeance which is to be executed upon the Protestant party; for the winepress is said to be trodden *without the city*, i. e., without the jurisdiction or reach of the city of Rome; and is represented in a separate vision, on purpose to show that vengeance will fall even upon such kingdoms and nations as had cast off the pope's supremacy. Dr. Gill and others have supposed, that the Protestant nations will again return to popery, and persecute with great violence; but Dr. Goodwin's idea is more probable. He says, in his Exposition, (Part II. chap. 1,) "Whether the winepress will be brought into this country, he only knows who is the Lord both of the harvest and the vintage;" (reader, mark well what follows;) "only this may be more confidently affirmed, that those carnal Protestants in England and other places, who, like the outward court, have been joined to the people of God, shall yet, before the expiration of the beast's kingdom and number, be more or less given up to the papists, and be made to vail to them, if not all of them, by bloody wars and conquests, yet, by some base and unworthy yielding to them, as a just punishment of their carnal profession of the gospel." "And the winepress was trodden without the city, and the blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." The Lord avert from this country such a judgment!—*Vide Bicheno's Signs of the Times.*

JOHN WILLISON, 1742.

"Before Antichrist's fall, one of the ten kingdoms which supported the beast shall undergo a *marvellous revolution.* (Rev. xi. 13.) "The same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell." By which *tenth part*, is to be understood one of the ten kingdoms into which the great city, Romish Babylon, was divided: this, many take to be the *kingdom of France*, it being the *tenth* and last of the kingdoms as to the time of its rise, and that which gave to Rome the denomination of a beast with ten horns, and, also, it being the only one of the ten that was never conquered since its rise. However unlikely this and other prophesied events may appear at the time, yet the Almighty hand of the only wise God can soon bring them about when least expected."

DR. JOHN GILL, 1752.

The destruction of Antichrist is the grand leading event to the glories of this state. This is hinted at in the epistle to the church at Philadelphia, the emblem of the spiritual reign; it will be the last struggle of the beast, that will cause that hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try the inhabitants of it: when the seventh trumpet shall be sounded, which shall bring on the spiritual kingdom of Christ throughout the world, he will destroy them which destroy the earth; meaning the papists, who have destroyed the inhabitants of the earth with their false doctrine, superstitious worship, and with those bloody wars, murders, and massacres, they have been at the bottom of. And till this is done, the spiritual reign cannot take place, especially in its full compass, and in all its branches, for, so long as Antichrist reigns, the church will be more or less in an afflicted state; the date of the church's troubles, and of the reign of Antichrist are alike, and will expire together: the power given to the beast, is to continue forty and two months; and so long the holy city, or church, is to be trodden under foot; and so long the witnesses will prophesy in sackcloth, even one thousand two hundred and threescore days, which are equal to forty-two months; wherefore, there can be no truly and happy days, until these dates are ended.

The destruction of Antichrist will be by the spirit of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; that is, by his coming in a spiritual way; or through the word of his mouth, his gospel attended by his spirit and power: which will shine out with so much lustre, splendour, light, and glory, as will chase away the darkness of popery, and enlighten the minds of people, to see into all the fopperies, absurdities, and wickedness of that religion, and cause them to cast it off; yea, even to open the eyes of the kings and princes of the earth, to behold and loath the abominations of the whore of Rome, they have committed fornication with; and fill them with wrath and indignation against her, as to hate her, make her bare and desolate, and burn her with fire.

This work will be greatly effected by the pouring out the seven vials of God's wrath, or the inflicting the seven last plagues upon the antichristian states, upon the western and eastern antichrist, the pope and Turk; who must be both removed to make way for the spiritual reign of Christ. These seven vials will be poured out, or those plagues inflicted by angels, by whom we are to understand Protestant kings, and princes, and generals of armies; and these will be given him by *one* or the *first* of the four beasts, or living creatures, the emblem of gospel ministers; who, having some notice of the time of Antichrist's destruction being at hand, will stir up and animate the Christian princes and potentates to put this work in hand; and who are, therefore, said to go forth from the temple, the church, the place of divine and spiritual worship, and where they themselves are worshippers! and from thence they have orders to go forth and do their work.

The first five of these vials concern the western Antichrist, and his dominions: between which, and the trumpets, there is a great correspondence, though they respect different times and persons. The first vial will be poured out upon the earth, and designs those popish countries which are upon the continent, as France and Germany, especially the latter; and, as the first trumpet brought the Goths into Germany, so the first vial will bring great distress upon the popish party in the empire, and issue in a reformation from popery. The second vial will be poured out upon the sea, and may intend the maritime powers belonging to the See of Rome, particularly Spain and Portugal; and as the second brought the Vandals into these places, so this vial will effect the same, and bring wars and desolations into them, and make a change in their religion. The third vial will be poured out upon the rivers and fountains of water, which may point to those places adjacent to Rome, as Italy and Savoy; and as the third trumpet brought the Huns into those parts, so this vial will bring in large armies hither, which will cause much bloodshed, and a great revolution in church and state. The fourth vial will be poured out upon the sun, which must denote some person or persons of great dignity and influence, and as the fourth trumpet brought destruction upon the Emperor of Rome, the sun of the empire, and upon the governors under him, signified by the moon and stars; this vial will bring on the ruin of the pope of Rome, the sun of the antichristian empire, with all his cardinals, bishops, priests, &c. The fifth vial will be poured out upon the seat of the beast, which is Rome, the seat, that the devil gave to the beast, and will produce great darkness in his kingdom though as yet it will not be utterly destroyed, which is reserved to the seventh vial. Now, these several vials as they will be so many plagues on the western Antichrist, and make so many breaches and ruins upon his states and domininions, so they will be so many gradual steps to the advancement of the glory and kingdom of Christ, and issue in the reformation of these places from popery. The sixth vial will be poured out on the river Euphrates, which designs the Turkish empire, in the midst of which that river is; and as the sixth trumpet let loose the four angels, or heads of the Ottoman family into Europe, so this vial affects the same empire, and brings destruction on it, signified by the drying up the waters of that river, as Babylon's destruction is expressed by the drying up of her sea, (Jer. li. 36,) which will make way for the kings, or kingdoms of the east; the kingdoms of Persia and Tartary, and others to receive and embrace the Christian religion: this is the second or Turkish wo, which shall pass away; when the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's, and his dominion will be from sea to sea, from the Mediterran sea to the Persian sea; and from the river Euphrates to the ends of the earth. The seventh vial will be poured out upon the air, the whole kingdom of Satan, in all the branches of it, who is the prince of the power of the air; and this vial will clear the whole world of all the remains of Christ's enemies, pagan, papal, and Mahomedan, which the other vial left or did not reach; and now will Christ's kingdom be in its full glory. Now the heathens, pagans, and Mahomedans, will perish out of his land, and these sort of sinners will be consumed out of the earth, and such wicked ones will be no more.

God will make a short work in righteousness, upon the enemies of his church; as yet I take it, none of them are poured out, though some great and learned men have so thought: as yet there has been no such devastation on the continent, as in France, and Germany, as to produce the above effects; nor in the countries of Spain and Portugal; nor in Italy and Savoy, and the like places near Rome, nor in the seat of the beast, Rome itself: nor on the pope and his cardinals; the river Euphrates is not dried up; the Ottoman empire is yet in being; the Turkish wo is not passed away; and much less the world cleared of all the enemies of Christ and his church; no, before this work is done, the outer court must be given to the Gentiles; and the witnesses must be slain. Had they begun to be poured out at the time of the reformation, as some have thought, in all likelihood they would have been finished before now; and Antichrist would have been destroyed, and better times than we are now in, would have succeeded; but, however, this we may be assured of, that as the plagues in Egypt issued in the destruction of Pharaoh, and in the deliverance of the Israelites, so these vials will end in the ruin of Antichrist, and in the salvation of the church of Christ. As soon as these things will take place, nay, as soon as you hear of those seven plagues, immediately you hear of persons on a sea of glass, triumphing over Antichrist, having the harps of God, and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb: and no sooner it is said, that Babylon is fallen, but voices are heard in heaven ascribing, glory, honour, and power to God, for his judgments on the great whore; declaring that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that the marriage of the Lamb is come; and his bride made ready; and proclaiming them happy that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb; all which respect the spiritual reign of Christ, now introduced by the ruin of Antichrist.

There will be very large conversions every where, in the several parts of the world; in all popish countries, and antichristian states; even the ten kings, that have given their kingdoms to the beast, have been associates of Antichrist, and reigned with him, shall withdraw from him; they and their subjects shall revolt from him, and be converted, and embrace the pure gospel; as

it will be the Christian princes and potentates that will pour out the seven vials on Antichrist, they will carry the gospel with them wherever they go; or however, the ministers of it will follow closely at their heels, way being made by the former for them; whose ministry will meet with great success every where, and those that escape the judgments of God in these nations, will not only by affrighted at them, but will be truly converted by the gospel, and give glory to the God of heaven. In the Mohamedan nations, the Turkish wo being past, and that empire being destroyed, and way made for the gospel to be carried into the eastern kingdoms, great and large conversions will be made by it; there is a most glaring prophecy of this in Isaiah lx. 7, which whole chapter concerns the spiritual and personal reign of Christ: "All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory." Now Kedar and Nabaioth, were the sons of Ismael, (Gen. xxv. 13,) who settled in Arabia, the country now possessed by the Turks; so that this is a prophecy of the conversion of multitudes in those parts, whereby the interest of Christ will be increased, and his church glorified. Moreover, in all pagan countries the gospel will make its way, and be successful; the covering and veil of blindness and ignorance, cast and spread over all the people and nations, will be removed by it; not only the darkness of popery and Mohamedanism, but the gross darkness of paganism shall flee away at the light and brightness of Zion's rising; the Gentiles shall come to it; the fullness and forces of them shall be bought into the church, being converted by the word; and not only vast multitudes of the common people, but great personages also; kings shall be enlightened by it; these shall come to Christ, fall down before him, and worship him; these shall come into his church, and become members of it; kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to his people; they shall bring their riches, honour, and glory into his house; and his saints shall such the breasts of kings, be enriched, honoured, and protected by them. This will be the time when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: not that there will be any change or alteration in the form and order of civil government, which will be the same as now; there will be kings and queens then, as at this time, as these prophecies show, it will not be until the personal reign of Christ takes place, that all rule, authority, and power, will be put down; civil magistracy in the spiritual reign will continue as it is; only it will change, it will be entirely in the hands of Christian kings and princes all the world over; and no doubt but it will be better exercised, be more orderly and regular; and that truth and righteousness will prevail every where. But I must not forget the conversion of that considerable body of people the Jews, who have been preserved a distinct people for several hundreds of years, for this purpose; the conversion of these people will be sudden, and of them altogether, a nation shall be born at once. It looks like as if their conversion would be like that of the Apostle Paul, and he seems to hint that it will, when he says, that he in obtaining mercy, was a pattern to them which should hereafter believe; meaning, perhaps, his own countrymen that should believe in Christ in the latter day, whose conversion would be similar to his; that as his conversion was sudden, in the midst of all his ignorance, unbelief and rebellion, and without the word, by the immediate power, and grace of God, so will theirs be in like manner; nor is it likely that their conversion should be by means of the word, since there is such an aversion in that people, to the hearing of it; and a rare thing it is to see a Jew in a Christian assembly. But, however, all Israel shall be called, converted, and saved; there is a famous prophecy of this in Hosea, iii. 4, 5; in the first of these verses it is said, the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince; without any civil government of their own, the sceptre having departed from them many hundred years ago; and without sacrifice, daily or yearly, or on any occasion; they believing it to be unlawful to sacrifice any where but in their own land, and at Jerusalem, and on the altar of God there; and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim; without any manner of idols, or idol-worship; they being not addicated to idolatry, since their return from the Babylonish captivity: and now as all these things are exactly fulfilled in them so will in like manner that which follows: afterwards shall the children of Israel return; by faith and repentance, from their evil way, from their impenitence and unbelief, and rejection of the Messiah; and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; the Messiah, the son of David, their king, as their own Targum paraphrases it; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days; in the spiritual reign of Christ; and it is hinted as in the Philadelphian state, (Rev. iii. 9,) then will the children of Israel appoint themselves one head, which is Christ, whom they will own and acknowledge to be their head, lord, and king; and they shall come out of the land, or countries, where they are, to their own land, and great shall be the day of Jezreel; and this will make a considerable part of the glory of Christ's spiritual reign.

The light of the gospel, both in the preachers and professors of it, will be very great, clear and distinct, the light of the moon, as in the present dispensation,

which it may be compared, shall be as the light of the sun, to which that dispensation shall be like; and the light of the sun shall be seven fold, as the light of seven days: as if the light of seven days were collected together, and shone out at once; hyperbolical expressions, setting forth the exceeding greatness of gospel light in those times; not only the watchmen, ministers of the word, shall see eye to eye, all truths clearly and distinctly; their ideas and sentiments shall be regular and uniform: there will be an entire harmony, and agreement between them; but even private Christians, common members, shall all know the Lord, and the things of the gospel, in a very clear and comfortable manner, even from the least of them unto the greatest of them: when God shall lay Zion's stones with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires, make her windows of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones; then all her children shall be taught of God, to such a degree as they never were before, so clearly, fully, and universally.

Brotherly love which is now waxen cold, will be in its heighth and glory, agreeable to the name of this state, Philadelphia, which signifies brotherly love: there will be no more contentions, animosities, and quarrels: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, on account of pre-eminence of office, gifts, and grace; and Judah shall not envy Ephraim, by any haughty and overbearing carriage, or with wrangling debates, and approbrious language; the two sticks of Ephraim and Judah, shall be one in the hand of the Lord; there will be perfect harmony and love, nothing to disturb, distress, and make uneasy, or tend to alienate the affections of one from another; there will be no pricking briar, nor grieving thorn among them; they will be like the first Christians, of one heart, and of one soul, being of one mind, and of one judgment; all studying to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.

Holiness which becomes the house of God forever, will now adorn every member in it; nor will there be so much immorality in the world as at this present time; holiness will be as common as profaneness is now; in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, holiness to the Lord—yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts; Christ, therefore, takes his tithes in writing to the church at Philadelphia, the emblem of the spiritual reign, suitable to its state; as truth and holiness shall then prevail, he addresses it thus, these things saith he that is holy, he that is true: truth and holiness go together; truth influences the heart, and that the life and conversation.

There will be great peace and prosperity of all kinds, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; in those days of the Messiah's spiritual reign, shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as oon endureth; as the saints will enjoy great peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind, so they will have nothing to disturb them without; there will be no more persecution; there will be none to hurt or destroy in all the Lord's holy mountain, as there will be no discord among themselves, so no distress from any enemies, violence shall no more be heard in their land, nor wasting and destruction within their border; O happy, halcyon days! I go on to observe.

There will be a personal appearance of the son of God, and a glorious one it will be: he will personally appear; the Lord himself shall descend; not by his spirit, or by the communication of his grace, or by his gracious presence, as before: but in person he will descend from the third heaven, where he is, in our nature, into the air, where he will be visible; every eye shall see him, when he cometh with clouds; or in the clouds of heaven, which will be his chariot; he will descend on earth at the proper time: and his feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives; on that spot of ground from whence he ascended to heaven. Job seems to have this descent of his in view, when he says, he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, which seems to respect not so much his first coming as his second; since it is connected with the resurrection of the dead.

This appearanee of Christ will be a very glorious one; it is called the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Happy are those that belong to this city, who are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; whose citizenship is in heaven, and they have a right to enter in through the gates into the holy city, the new Jerusalem; but miserable will those be, that will be without, for without are dogs: and then he that is unjust, will be unjust still; and he that is filthy, will be filthy still; and he that is righteous, will be righteous still; and he that is holy, will be holy still. —*Sermon from* Psalm lxxxvii. 3, *preached, December* 27, 1752.

NEWTON.

Sir Isaac Newton says, "Among the interpreters of the last age, there is scarce one of note who hath not made some discovery worth knowing. It is little encouragement to this kind of study to reflect, that two of the most learned men of their times, Mr. Mede and Mr. Daubuz, the one died a fellow of a college, and the other a vicar of Yorkshire." Mr. Mede, as we read in the memoirs of his life, was so modest, that he wished for nothing more than a donative or sinecure to be added to his fellowship: but even this he could not obtain. But, however, let us proceed: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein." Dr. Newton observes, "Notwithstanding the general current in her favour (meaning the church of Rome,) the

tide shall turn against her;* and the hands which helped to raise her, shall help to pull her down. The ten horns shall hate her; that is, by a common figure of the whole for a part, some of the ten kings, for others shall bewail and lament for her, and shall fight and perish in the cause of the beast.† Some of the kings who formerly loved her, grown sensible of her exorbitant exactions and oppressions, shall hate her, shall strip, and expose, and plunder her, and utterly consume her with fire. Rome, therefore, will finally be destroyed, by some of the princes who are reformed; or shall be reformed from popery: and as the kings of France have contributed greatly to her advancement, it is not impossible, nor improbable, that some time or other they may also be the principal authors of her destruction. France hath already shown some tendency towards a reformation, and therefore may appear more likely to effect such a revolution. Such a revolution may reasonably be expected; because this infatuation of popish princes is permitted by Divine Providence only for a certain period, until the words of God shall be fulfilled, and particularly the words of the prophet Daniel: "They shall be given into his hand, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time; but," then, as it immediately follows, "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume, and to destroy it until the end." It is upon the seventh, or last head of the beast, that the horns are seen growing together, that is, upon the Roman empire, in its seventh or last form of government; and they are not like the heads successive, but contemporary kingdoms. "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast;" which is easily understood, and applied to the princes and states in communion with the church of Rome. However they may differ in other respects, yet they agree in submitting implicitly to the authority of the Roman church, and in defending its rights and prerogatives against all opposers. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them." They persecute the true church of Christ, but the true church shall in the end prevail, and triumph over them; which particulars have been fulfilled in part already, and will be more fully accomplished hereafter. "The fall of Rome," in the latter day, "is delineated as of another Babylon; and it is declared, that she shall be destroyed by fire, and her destruction shall be a complete and total destruction, such as hath never yet been the fate of Rome. Some of the princes who were once of her communion shall hate her as much as they loved her, and burn her with fire. It is further intimated, that Rome shall be swallowed up by a subterraneous fire, shall sink like a great millstone in the sea, and her smoke shall rise up forever and forever; and the soil and situation of Rome, and the neighbouring countries, greatly favour such a supposition; as St. John saith, *she spiritually is called Sodom*, and she shall resemble Sodom in her punishment as well as in her crimes. After the subversion of the capital city, the beast and the false prophet, the powers civil and ecclesiastical, with those who still adhere to their party, shall make one effort more; but it shall prove as weak and vain as it is impious. A tradition hath prevailed amongst the Jews, that the destruction of Rome, and the redemption of Israel, shall fall out about the same time.

* Is not this visible at the present moment?
† This is too true.

REV. DAVID SIMPSON, A. M. 1799.*

These are wonderful predictions, in which we are all most nearly concerned; because the awful times of which they speak, we have reason to believe, are just at hand; and none of us know how soon we may be involved in the distresses which are here foretold. The Roman empire, we have seen, was to be broken up, and divided into *ten kingdoms*. Some time, soon after the formation of these ten kingdoms, which are denominated *horns*, there was to arise one *little horn*, one small dominion, underneath, or from behind, *three* of the *ten horns*, or kingdoms, into which the empire should be divided. This little horn was to conquer and subdue three of the ten horns, and to usurp their dominion. After this, it was to go on and increase more and more, till it had obtained a peculiar kind of power and jurisdiction over all the seven other horns. This one little horn, which was become so great and powerful, was also to grow proud, and vain, and cruel, and bloody, and tyrannical, and idolatrous, and a vile persecutor of the true servants of the living God. This horribly bloody and tyrannical power, was to be aided and assisted in its cruelties towards the genuine followers of the Lamb, by all the other seven kingdoms, over which it had obtained an unbounded influence. This wicked and cruel dominion was to continue *a time and times and half a time*. A *time* here, in prophetic language, signifies a Jewish year, which consisted of three hundred and sixty days. The *times* then will signify twice three hundred and sixty days; and *half a time* will signify half of three hundred and sixty days, or one hundred and eighty days. But a *day*, in the language of prophecy, is put for a *year*. If, therefore, we add these numbers together, they will be thrice three hundred and sixty years, and one hundred and eighty years, or exactly twelve hundred and sixty years, for the continuance of this bloody and tyrannical power; at the end of which period it is to be completely and everlastingly destroyed.

Now let us look back and see whether all

* *Vide*, his Plea for Religion, a most admirable and interesting book; fifth edition, 1808.

these strange predictions of Daniel have ever been accomplished.

The Roman empire was to be destroyed. It was so, in the fifth and sixth centuries. It was to be divided into a number of small kingdoms: it was so in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. A little horn was to arise, unperceived, and subdue three of the ten horns. The bishop of Rome, in a sort of secret and imperceptible manner, did arise to temporal dominion, and subdued, by the help of Pepin, king of France, three of those ten states, into which the empire had been divided; the *senate of Rome*, the *kingdom of Lombardy*, and the *Exarchate* of *Ravenna*; three governments all in Italy. And it is extremely remarkable, that upon becoming master of these three estates, the bishop of Rome assumed a triple crown, which he hath worn ever since, and which he continues to wear at this very day! This is wonderful.

Now, the bishop of Rome was to retain his power over these three states, and his influence over the seven other kingdoms, twelve hundred and sixty years. If we knew exactly when to begin to reckon these years, we should know precisely when the destruction of Antichrist would take place. Some begin to reckon from the year 606, when the proud prelate of Rome was declared *universal bishop*. Others begin from the year 666, the apocalyptic number; and others from the year 756, when he became a temporal prince. If the first period be right, then the pope of Rome, the undoubted Antichrist of the New Testament, will be completely destroyed, *as a horn*, about the year 1866. If the second period be intended by the *Spirit of Prophecy*, then his end will be near the year 1926. But if the third period be the time, then Antichrist will retain some part of his dominion over the nations till about the year 2016.*

Most evident it is, that he is rapidly falling. There is a great deal, however, yet to be done. But, *when* God *works, who shall let?* Much has been already done, and *all* will be accomplished in due time. Not *one word* shall fall to the ground of all that the Lord hath spoken.

Nay, not only shall Antichrist be overthrown, but even Rome itself, the place and city where he hath carried on his abominations for so many ages, shall be everlastingly destroyed. The language of Scripture is extremely strong, and seems sufficiently clear and precise.†

Thus Daniel: "I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the *burning flame*." Thus, too, St. Paul, where he is probably speaking of Antichrist: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." And, again, in another place in the same epistle, where he is certainly and professedly speaking of Antichrist, he saith: "And then shall that *Wicked* be revealed, whom the Lord shall *consume* with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Thus, too, St. John: "The *beast* goeth into *perdition*." Again: "Her plagues shall be in one day, and she shall be *utterly burned with fire*. The kings of the earth shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they see the *smoke* of her *burning*, standing afar off for fear of her torment, saying, Alas! alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in *one hour* is thy judgment come. In *one hour* so great riches are come to *nought!* They shall see the *smoke* of her *burning!* And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with *violence* shall that great city Babylon be *thrown down*, and shall be *found no more at all*. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee. And no craftsman, of whatever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee: and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee." Immediately after these words, all the inhabitants of heaven are represented as rejoicing, and saying, Hallelujah! "And her *smoke* rose up forever and ever."

It will be allowed, that these are very strong expressions, and imply a punishment extremely severe. It is remarkable, too, that all the country about the city of Rome, is a kind of bitumen, or pitchy substance. And in the year of our Lord 80, a fire burst out from beneath the ground, in the middle of the city, and burnt four of the principal *heathen* temples, with the sacred buildings of the capitol. Italy, indeed, is a storehouse of fire: and when the one thousand two hundred and sixty days are expired, Rome itself, with all its magnificence, will be absorbed in a lake of fire, sink into the sea, and rise no more at all forever.

* The number of bishops, whom we usually call popes, who have presided over the Romish church from its first institution by the apostles, is about two hundred and fifty or sixty; they have, therefore, presided only about seven years each upon an average.

† It is granted, that all the passages upon this subject are figurative and prophetic, and therefore must be interpreted with caution; but yet seem so strong and precise, that we cannot understand them in any more moderate sense. The reader will compare them together, and form his own judgment.

It was this grand Antichristian apostasy, of which we have been speaking, that St. Paul unquestionably alludes to in 2 Thess. ii. 1—12; in 1 Tim. iv. 1—3; and in 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. St. John speaks of the same thing, (1 John ii. 18, 22;) and in the book of Revelation, he hath described the abominations of the church of Rome at considerable length, but in language highly figurative,* If we will be at the pains to lay all these predictions together, and compare them with those of Daniel, beforementioned, we cannot fail seeing to whom all the characters belong, and how awful the destruction is, which awaits this mother of abominations.

J. BICHENO, A. M.†

Will all the numbers of Daniel and John, which refer to the state of things that we are looking for, agree with the present time? Let us examine.

In discussing the numbers of Daniel, I shall not take up much time in examining questions, and in endeavouring to solve difficulties which might be started, nor in inquiring whether any of these numbers terminated in Antiochus Epiphanes. I think, and I have very respectable authorities on my side, that they refer to the overthrow of the papal apostasy, and all those symptoms of tyranny which have been so much at enmity with the kingdom of Christ; to the purification of the Gentile church, and to the restoration and conversion of the Jews. To save time, and to spare the reader's patience, I shall take some things for granted, which may be seen argued at length in more volumnious writings.

In the first place, let us consider Daniel's vision in chap. viii. It opens with the appearance of a *ram* (v. 4,) having two horns, pushing westward, and northward, and southward. This the angel interprets (v. 20,) to be the kings of Media and Persia. The next object in the vision is an *he goat*, (v. 5,) which came from the west, with a notable horn between his eyes. This, the angel says, (v. 21,) is the king of Grecia, the Grecian empire; and the great horn between his eyes, the *first* king, or kingdom, under Alexander, his brother, and two sons. This horn was broken (v. 8,) and after it came up four others; the four empires which sprung up out of the conquests of Alexander. "And out of one of them came a little horn, (v. 9,) which waxed exceeding great, towards the south, and towards the east, and towards the pleasant land, and by him the place of the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down," &c. (V. 13,) "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

It seems natural to reckon those twenty-three hundred days (or years,) either from the first part of the vision, the pushing of the ram, or the latter end, the violences of the little horn, or from the time when Daniel saw the vision.* If we calculate from the time when Daniel saw the vision, the termination of the twenty-three hundred years is past forty or fifty years, and the sanctuary is not cleansed. If from the latter part of the vision (as understood of Antiochus,) it will carry us to about the year A. D. 2130, which appears too far: for supposing the twelve hundred and sixty year's power of the beast, predicted in the Apocalypse, were to be calculated from the time when the pope became a temporal prince, from the *Exarchate of Ravenna* being given to him by Pepin, A. D. 755, or by Charlemagne, A. D. 774, this would fall short of Daniel's number by more than a hundred years; but seeing that the power, idolatry, corruptions, and usurpations of the papacy, were such, at least in the sixth century, as

* The seven seals in this hieroglyphical book refer to Rome in her pagan state; the seven trumpets to the Roman empire in its Christian state; and the seven vials to the same Roman empire, broken into ten kingdoms, in its popish and antichristian state.

It is somewhat singular, that the learned author (Mr. Simpson) should no where have noticed the celebrated work of Mr. Fleming. That this gentleman should, in so remarkable and express a manner, have foretold the year of the French revolution, and the extreme degradation of the French monarchy, is surely a circumstance deserving of great attention. His whole work is interesting, but it is much to be hoped that his conjecture, respecting the general prevalence of popery, is not equally well founded. The modesty and piety of the performance carry with them a great recommendation.

There is some reason, from the present appearance of things, to suppose, that one thousand two hundred and sixty prophetical years must be calculated from a period somewhat earlier than the commencement of the seventh century. The year of our Lord 538, accords with the downfall of the pope's temporal dominion, A. D. 1798.

† This extract from the sixth edition of his Signs of the Times, 1808, an admirable and concise work on the Prophecies, which is earnestly recommended to every reader on this subject.

* Dr. Newton, bishop of Bristol, concludes from v. 13, that these days are to be calculated from the beginning of the vision. "As the question was asked," says he, not how long the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the transgression of desolation continue, but also, how long the vision shall last; so the answer is to be understood; and these two thousand and three hundred days denote the whole time from the beginning of the vision, to the cleansing of the sanctuary," (Dissert. on the Proph. vol. i. p. 331.) Dr. Lowth in his comment on this passage, says, "The words may be rendered more agreeably to the Hebrew, thus: *For how long a time shall the vision last, the daily sacrifice be taken away and the transgression of desolation continue?*

appear sufficient to denominate it a beast, and it is certain, that he began to rise much earlier; the most probable time for the fixing the commencement of Daniel's twenty-three hundred years, and that which will altogether agree best with the other numbers of Daniel, and the predictions in the Apocalypse, is the beginning of the vision, the pushing of the ram, by which is intended some distinguished exertions of the Persian empire for conquests. And to what period of that empire does this so well agree as to the times of Xerxes, and that particular push which he made when he invaded Greece* with an army of 2,641,610 fighting men, reckoning 517,610 on board his fleet, which consisted of 1207 ships of the line of battle, 3000 gallies, transports, victuallers, &c., beside the two hundred and twenty ships which the nations on this side the Hellespont added, on board of which were 24,000 men? Of his land forces, 80,000 were horse. And besides this multitude, as many more are reckoned to have followed the camp, servants, eunuchs, &c., so that the whole number of people engaged in this expedition was at least 5,000,000. What a push was this for conquest! And (though he had been pushing for three or four years before,) yet, nothing else forbidding it, what period could be more proper for the angel to begin his reckoning from? He passed the Hellespont B. C. 470: four years before this he pushed at Egypt, and reduced it; the next year he prepared for this invasion; the following he entered into a league with the Carthaginians against the Greeks, and in the year 481 B. C., marches as far as Sardis, on his way towards Greece, where he winters, and in the spring passes the Hellespont.

Suppose we fix the year 481 B. C. for the commencement of Daniel's two thousand three hundred years, (allowing our chronology to be correct,) this carries us to the year of Christ 1819, when the sanctuary and host are no longer to be trodden under foot, *i. e.*, the land of Palestine is no longer to be in possession of the enemies of the Jews, but they are to be restored, and the church freed from antichristian abominations.

But it may be objected, that as the Jewish year consisted but of three hundred and sixty days, five days and a quarter short of our solar year, this will make a difference of thirty-one years short. To which I answer: A single Jewish year consisted but of three hundred and sixty days, and when we consider three or four years only, this mode of reckoning may be admitted: but, as we have leap years to regulate our measurement of time, so had the Jews. When it was necessary, they intercalated their month *Adar;* sometimes even a whole month, and this they were obliged to do to make their feasts of the *Passover*, *Pentecost*, and *Tabernacles*, happen at their proper seasons. The Targum of Chron. xii. 32, says of the children of Issachar, that "they were skillful in knowledge of times, and wise to fix the beginning of the years; dexterous at setting the new moons and fixing their feasts at their seasons." Hence it follows, that though the Jewish ordinary year is to be attended to when but a few years are under consideration, yet, in a long succession of time, they are not to be noticed, for by intercalations they amount to the same with solar years.

In Daniel xii., we have three different numbers. The first agrees with that in chap. vii. 25, v. 7; "I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swear by him that liveth forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and a half time." Three years and a half, or forty-two months of years, viz. twelve hundred and sixty. "And when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Again, (v. 11,) "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." (V. 12.) "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." As the first number agrees with the predictions in the Revelation of John, respecting the continuance of the power and prosperity of the antichristian beast, and as the numbers appear to contradict each other if they are confined to the tyranny of Antiochus, (though he might be pointed at as the type of Antichrist,) I consider them as harmonizing with the New Testament predictions. According to Rev. xi. 2, the holy city is to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles forty and two months; and (in v. 3,) the two witnesses are to prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth. Chap. xii. 7, we have the same number; and, (in v. 14,) we learn that the woman was to be nourished in the wilderness for a time, and times, and half a time. Chap. xiii. 5, power is given to the beast (the first beast remember, not the second,) to continue or practice forty and two months. The same time, twelve hundred and sixty years, is intended by all these numbers.*

But how can we reconcile those three different numbers of Daniel with the seven, (two in Daniel and five in the Apocalypse,) which agree?

In the first place, let it be allowed, that the convulsions which are to bring about the

"rideaux's Connect. Part. I. Book iv. p. 233.

* Here let me again remind the reader, that in the style of the prophets, a *day* is a *year* a *month thirty years*, and a *year* three hundred and sixty *years*, there being so many days in the Jewish month and year. A *time* is the same as a year, (Dan. iv. 16,) *times*, *two* years, and the *dividing of time*, *half* a year. which put together, amounts to twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days, or years.

predicted final overthrow of Antichrist began with the revolution in France in 1780, and then reckon thus.

Daniel's time, times, and half a time (twelve hundred and sixty years) begin and end with the five numbers in the Apocalypse, and as they are twelve hundred and sixty years, and supposed to end at the French revolution, they must begin A. D. 529, and end in 1789. Daniel's two thousand three hundred years begin four hundred and eighty-one years before Christ, and end in 1819, when some other great event or events, will take place. The beast and the false prophet, (Rev. xix. 20,) *i. e.*, the papacy and the French tyranny having previously been brought to an end, then, perhaps, if these events have not previously been realized, the dragon, will be bound, (Rev. xx. 2,) and the Jews, the dry bones in the valley of vision, (Ezek. xxxvii.,) be raised to political life, and restored to their own land. Daniel's twelve hundred and ninety years begin with his time, times, and half a time, and with the former five numbers of John in the Apocalypse, *i. e.*, at the commencement of the reign of the beast, A. D. 529, and end with the former number, (two thousand three hundred) in 1819, and which they must, for they are to accomplish the same event, as may be seen by comparing Dan. viii. 13, with chap. xii. 11. This agreement deserves particular attention. His thirteen hundred and thirty-five years (the end of which, according to him, will eminently be a blessed time,) begin in the same year of Christ 529, and terminate in 1864, when, perhaps, the Jews are to be converted by that remarkable appearance of the Lord in their favour which is predicted in Ezek. xxxviii, xxxix., and in Zech. xii., and xiv. Thus, the final attack on the beast commences in 1789. Thirty years are employed in the overthrow of the papacy, the Turks, and other tyrannies: a season, it is likely, of great calamities, but especially to the enemies of Christ's kingdom. The next forty-five years, to 1864, to which time Daniel's thirteen hundred and thirty-five years extend, may be spent in gathering the Jews, (who, according to Jer. xvi. 16, will be unwilling to return to their own land,) and in purifying them by those trials which, according to the prophets, (Jer. xxx. 3—8, 11—16. Ezek. xx. 32—38; xxxvi. 24, 36. Zeph. iii. 7—20. Zech. xii. xiii. xiv.,) are to take place on their first return; as well as in purifying, and in bringing to an end all the sects and parties of the Gentile Christians; and which may be effected by that greater light which is to shine upon the Christian church in the latter days, previous to that greater glory and superior state of felicity which is to commence, perhaps, (as we have conjectured from Daniel's number of thirteen hundred and thirty-five, about the year 1864, on the conversion of the Jews, and of those heathen nations not before gathered to Christ.

But, perhaps, it may be asked, What arguments are there which favour the conjecture of the 529th year of Christ being that from which the power of the beast is to be dated? I own I have put this year down by accident, as the measurement back from 1789. To demonstrate, that in this year he came to such a state of maturity (for this mystery of iniquity was forming in the apostle's days, (2 Thes. ii. 7,) and continued to grow for ages,) as to constitute him a beast, is not essential to the making good our hypothesis. But, though no man, from the history of past times, can determine the exact year from which God dates the kingdom of Antichrist, yet there are good reasons, from which a probable conjecture may be formed, that it was as early as the sixth century.

The Apostle Paul, speaking of that which hindered the progress of this wicked one, says, (2 Thess. ii. 6—12,) The mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way: and then shall that wicked one be revealed, &c. Our most approved commentators suppose, that by he who letteth, the imperial power is intended, and that he must not expect to find this wicked one arrived at maturity till the fall of the western empire. This took place A. D. 476. Soon after this, therefore, we may expect the ecclesiastical tyranny to be matured.

Some of our most able critics, as Bishop Newton and Mr. Lowman, are of opinion, that by the wound which the first beast received, (chap. xiii. 3,) we are to understand the blow which was given to the majesty and power of Rome, by subjecting it to the Exarchate of Ravenna: and that by its being healed, is intended its restoration to its former dignity, by this Exarchate being given to the pope, by which he became a temporal prince. Now this wounding took place A. D. 568, and continued two hundred and six years. If this be well considered, it tends much to strengthen our argument; for though, when the pope was made a temporal prince, at the time of this healing, the world wondered more than ever after the beast, (Rev. xiii. 3,) yet the papal beast existed before, and this only gave him increasing eclat.

But farther, to confirm our hypothesis, consider the state of society, and particularly the state of what was called the church, in this sixth century. Now, magistrates were tyrants, and priests were wicked, superstitious, and intolerant, beyond any former age. Now, numberless laws and regulations were obtruded upon the church by human authority, which at once violated the authority of Christ, defaced Christianity, and robbed Christians of their dearest liberties. And in this very year, 529, which we are looking for, the Justinian code was first published, by which those powers, privileges, and immunities were secured to the clergy; that union perfected between things civil

ecclesiastical, and those laws imposed on the church which have proved so injurious to Christianity, and so calamitous to mankind. And which code, through the zeal of the clergy, has been received, more or less, as the foundation of the jurisprudence of almost every state in Christendom; and that, not only in things civil, but ecclesiastical: and by this means, as some author has observed, the old fancy of the Romans, about the eternity of their command, is thus far verified. We may add also, that this same Justinian, if not in 529, yet as early as 534, declared the pope the head of all churches; all were to be subject to his judgment, but himself to be judged by none. Now, also, it was that this emperor issued that impious edict, (the first law of the kind in the Roman empire,) by which the imperial faith (having been first approved by the Roman pontiff) was imposed on all his Christian subjects, and to impugn the doctrine of the trinity, as explained by his majesty, subjected the offender to loss of the most important civil rights, to confiscation of goods and banishment, and which law has been copied into the statute books of all the states of the beast's empire, even that of Great Britain.

That this phamphlet, which is already larger than intended, may not be swelled into a volume, permit me to refer to Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. Cent. VI., and especially Part ii. chap. II. III. IV. All sorts of absurdities were imposed; the grossest ignorance and wickedness prevailed among the clergy; the Bishop of Rome grasped at absolute authority over conscience, and unlimited supremacy over the whole Christian church; and though he did not altogether succeed in the east, in this western part of the world, where the scene of John's visions chiefly lay, his dominion was acknowledged, and parasitical panegyrists, among other blasphemous assertions, maintained that the Romish pontiff was constituted judge in the place of God, which he filled as viceregent of the Most High; so that now was fulfilled that prediction of the apostle, (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4,) *As God he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* Now, the wicked were taught that remission of sins was to be purchased by their liberalities to the church and its ministers; now, those doctrines which taught men the worship of saints and images, the efficacy of observing human rites and institutions towards the attainment of salvation, the power of relics, and a thousand more absurdities were brought to perfection. Now did monkery over-run the world, and marriage was forbidden, as unworthy of those who aspired to be saints. And in this very year 529 also, a new order of monks, which in a manner absorbed all the others established in the west, was instituted by *Benedict* of *Nursia.* In process of time, this order having acquired immense riches, they sunk into luxury, intemperance, and sloth; abandoned themselves to all sorts of vices; extended their zeal and attention to worldly affairs; insinuated themselves into the cabinets of princes; took part in political cabal and court factions; made a vast augmentation of superstitious rites; and among other meritorious enterprises, laboured most ardently to swell the arrogance, by enlarging the power and authority of the Roman pontiff. This and the other monastic orders, (sinks of ignorance, indolence, and vice;) were the fountains from whence issued all sorts of abominations, and the rivers which carried superstition, oppression, and violence, to all parts of the earth. They taught princes to tyrannise, and the people to cringe.

Was not the time of the publishing of the forementioned code of Justinian, and of the rising of this order of monks, &c., a period in the history of the apostasy, in which we may suppose the Almighty, with distinguished propriety, to begin to reckon the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the beast's power, and the treading down of the holy city? The conjecture is probable *a priori*; but, if present events agree to recommend this date 529, the probability is much increased.

To say no more of this concurrence of several numbers, thus issuing from different periods, and these the most interesting in the history of nations, and of the church, and yet harmonizing in their termination so conformable to what the prophets seem to point out, respecting the events of the last days; a concurrence which is not the effect of laboured contrivance, as some at first sight may imagine, but the natural and necessary consequence of taking the French Revolution, in 1789, as the termination of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the prophets, and the point from which to measure all their other numbers, is a circumstance which gives great probability to the hypothesis. that the time is arrived for the downfall of the antichristian tyranny, *when God will rebuke the nations, and they shall learn war no more; when he will consume the idolatrous and persecuting man of sin with the spirit of his mouth, and utterly destroy him with the brightness of his coming.*

In chap. xi., which contains explanatory visions, we are informed that the seventh angel does not sound his trumpet, to bring the decisive wo, till after the witnesses are risen from the dead, in some one of the antichristian kingdoms, nor till that kingdom; or *tenth part* of the antichristian city, is so shaken by an earthquake, that it falls. Here it is necessary to recollect what has been advanced in the first part of *Signs of the Times.* It is there endeavoured to be proved, that by the *second beast,* which came up out of the earth, (Rev. xiii. 11—18,) the French tyranny, as perfected by Louis XIV. was intended; and that it was his repeal of the edict of Nantz which gave

the death-blow to *the witnesses for religious truth and civil liberty* in France; that it was the French monarchy that caused an image to be made to *the first beast* (the papacy) by the establishment of a spiritual tyranny similar to that Rome, and which contrary to the state of things in any other country where the pope's supremacy in spirituals has been acknowledged, was at once independent of the pope's authority, and yet in support of his pretensions and corruptions. I have also endeavoured to prove that it was here exclusively *the witnesses* laid politically dead exactly three lunar days and a half, or one hundred and five years; that the revolution in France, in 1789, produced *the resurrection of the witnesses* to civil life, and that the commotions which followed were the prophetic earthquake here predicted and that the fall of *the tenth part of the city* was accomplished in the overthrow of the monarchy of France. Immediately after this, the seventh angel sounds, and ushers in the *third woe*, which is to be the means of hastening the kingdom of God. The nations are angry, (compare chap. xi. 18, with xix. 19,) and gather themselves together to oppose the designs of God: his wrath falls upon them, and they are destroyed. This *eleventh* chapter, we must remember, is a miniature-picture of the history of the Christian church, from its first beginnings to the end of time. Hereafter, we shall find the events of *the seventh trumpet*, or *third woe*, exhibited on a larger scale, and related with a more circumstantial detail.

Our first inquiry should be, what is the meaning of *thunder* in the mystical and figurative language of prophecy? As in the natural world the things of creation are comprised in the heavens and the earth, and the heavens are considered as the nobler parts of the creation, so in the world politic, in prophetic language, the heavens mean thrones and governments; the sun, moon, and stars, emperors, kings, princes, and great men, as well as empires, kingdoms, and states; the earth signifies the great mass of the common people, or the countries and provinces ruled over: clouds mean multitudes; wind, hail, storm, and thunder, as well as earthquakes, signify wars and commotions among multitudes and nations. Thus in Isaiah xxviii. 2, When God, by his prophet, threatens to punish by war, the language is, "The Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which, as a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth." And again, (chap. xxix. 6.) "Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and a flame of devouring fire." The next verse explains what this thunder and storm is: "And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel shall be as a dream." Sir Isaac Newton, *On the Language of Prophecy*, p. 18, says, "Tempestuous winds, or the motion of clouds, are put for wars; thunder, or the voice of a cloud, for the voice of a multitude; a storm of thunder, and lightning, and hail, and overflowing rain, for a tempest of war descending from the heavens and clouds politic." Dr. Warburton, in his *Divine Legation*, Book IV, Sect. 4, says, "The old Asiatic style, so highly figurative, seems, by what we find of its remains in the prophetic language of the sacred writings, to have been evidently fashioned to the mode of ancient hieroglyphics. both *curiologic* and *tropical*. Of the second kind, which answers to the *tropical* hieroglyphic, is the calling empires, kings, and nobles, by the names of the heavenly luminaries, the sun, moon, and stars; their temporary disasters, or entire overthrow, by eclipses and extinctions; the destruction of the nobility, by stars falling from the firmament; hostile invasions, by thunder and tempestuous winds; and leaders of armies, conquerors, and founders of empires, by lions, bears, leopards, goats, or high trees. In a word, the prophetic style seems to be a SPEAKING HIEROGLYPHIC."

If we mention all the passages in the sacred writings where thunder is mentioned in the prophetic style, we shall find that it generally, if not always, signifies war. It is probable, then, that these seven thunders were intended to mark out, for the direction of the pious inquirer into the signs of the times, seven wars, or periods of war, between the sixth and seventh trumpet, which should afflict this western part of the world, or those nations which had given their power to the papal beast, or which in any form had assumed antichristian power in religion, and which wars should prepare the way for the great scene which was to follow.

But here it will be proper to ask (for frequent observation has convinced me that such questions are not altogether needless,) Does the reader believe it as probable that a prophecy may be fulfilled by the events which take place in his own day, and which pass under his own observation, as well as by those of five hundred years back, or five hundred years to come? Does he think the wars and great events of nations which have or may take place in this age, and in these countries of Europe, as worthy to be the subject of prophecy as what was foretold by Daniel (chap. xi.,) respecting the invasion of Greece by Xerxes; or of the conquests of Alexander, and the fate of his empire; or of the league which was formed between Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, and Antiochus Theus, king of Syria, by the marriage of Berenice, the daughter of the former, with the latter, and the consequences that followed that connection? I hope he does.

As the seven thunders appear evidently to occupy the space between the sixth and seventh trumpet, and as thunder in the prophetic writings is allowed to be the speaking hieroglyphic of war, and as it is

likewise probable that the sixth trumpet, or second wo, ended about the year 1697, it is worth while to inquire, whether these thunders have uttered their voices, that is, whether there have been seven periods of war in Europe since that time. On examination, the history of this century will inform us, that, taking all the nations together which do, or have, made up the body of the papal beast, and among whom the remains of religious corruption, usurpation, &c., continue, (and which almost all allow to be the object of these visions,) there have been just seven of these thunders, or periods of war, neither more nor less. And it is worthy of remark, that this is the case, whether we take into the account those states and kingdoms only which sprung out of the ruins of the old Roman empire, or all those that compose the Latin church, or even the whole of Europe. We shall consider those wars in which all Europe have been engaged, so far only as the nations which are, or have been subject to the papacy, have been concerned in them.

1. The first period of war commenced in 1700, and continued, without intermission, till 1721 inclusive; for, when other powers terminated their destructions, and hushed the roar of war in some parts of Europe by the peace of Utrecht, in 1713, and by that of Rastadt, in 1714, then, as though alarmed lest mankind should be too happy, the madman, Charles the Twelfth, of Sweden, roused himself from his bed of affected sickness, at Dometica, and prosecuted his war against Russia, Denmark, Prussia, Poland, Hanover, and Saxony, with renewed vigour. In these wars the following powers were engaged: Sweden, Russia, Denmark, Poland, England, Holland, the Emperor, Spain, France, the Venetians, the Turks, &c. This was the first thunder.

2. The second, though very violent while it lasted, was of shorter duration than the former, continuing only through the three campaigns of 1733, 1734, and 1735. In this war, there were engaged the Emperor, France, Spain, Sardinia, &c. The interval of peace was short; for,

3. In 1737, the third thunder began to roll; nor did it cease to lay the fairest parts of Europe in ruins till 1748. In the wars which filled up this period of destruction, the following powers were engaged; the Emperor, Russians, and Turks, led the way; England and Spain quickly followed; France, Prussia, and Holland, also united to increase the calamity.

4. In 1755, commenced another period of war, which soon set all Europe in a flame. Great Britain, France, Prussia, Saxony, Austria, Sweden, Spain, and Portugal, experienced its effects. This period of war lasted till 1763, and was the fourth thunder.

5. The fifth, though extremely violent where it raged, did not extend itself so wide. The parties engaged were the Russians, Poles, and Turks. The French and Corsicans also increased the roar. Poland was never so desolated. This commenced in 1768, and continued five years.

6. Peace, as usual, was but of short continuance. The dispute of Great Britain with her American colonies, which broke out into an open rupture in 1775, was the occasion of a sixth general tempest breaking upon the chief maritime powers of Europe, and which continued from 1778 to 1782, five years. The powers engaged were Great Britain, France, Spain, and Holland.

7. The seventh, and last, period of war was from 1788 to 1791, inclusive. The parties engaged, were the Russians and Austrians against the Turks; the Swedes against the Russians and Danes; the Belgians also, who revolted against the Emperor, increased the tempest. Denmark soon became neuter; and, as far as the Emperor and Swedes were concerned, peace was restored in 1790, but the Russians and Turks continued their slaughter till 1791. This was the seventh thunder.

This last period of war seems, under Providence, to have been among the principal causes of the success of the revolutionists in France: for those who may be thought to have been the most disposed to assist the French court were otherwise employed. This circumstance has not been noticed by the writers of the day. It has been observed, that it happened unfortunately with respect to the aristocratical party in France, that Europe had seldom been, through a long course of years, in a state less capable of affording the succours which were now demanded by the princes, nobles, and clergy of that country, or in which the minds of the people, or the dispositions of the sovereigns, were less calculated for undertaking any enterprise, than at present. The mad ambition of the Emperor Joseph, under the influence of the overwhelming power and vast designs of Russia, to which he became so miserable a dupe, besides the ruin and spirit of revolt which it spread through his own dominions, had, in no small degree, deranged the general policy of Europe. And, it is worthy to be observed, that just when this prince was on the eve of making peace with the Turks, and which, being accomplished, he might then have been able to turn his attention to the situation of his brother-in-law, the king of France, he died, (February 20, 1790.) His successor, Leopold, immediately set himself to accomplish what death prevented Joseph from executing; but no sooner was peace concluded with the Ottoman court, and his revolting subjects in Brabant brought to obedience, than he died also, (March 1, 1791.) All these events counteracted every inclination which the court of Vienna might have to oppose the progress of the French revolution, and gave time for its gaining such a

firm establishment, that before Francis, the present emperor, could be prepared for the meditated attack, the people of France were become too much enlightened as to the enormities of the old system, too much informed of their rights and strength, and too united, to be easily frightened into a retreat.

The courts of London and Madrid were occupied in a squabble about an object scarcely bearing or deserving a name. The king of Sardinia, from the state of his finances, of his army, of his fortresses, was not in a condition to hazard any attempt in favour of the old despotism, till too late. We may add the immense debts, contracted in the wars of the present century, (originating from the impolitic and ruinous practice of funding, which must in the end, and perhaps, very soon, terminate in events the most calamitous to those who had to resort to such unwise measures:) these debts, I say, and the consequent derangement of the finances of all the powers in Europe, proved highly favourable to the cause of the French reformers; and however great the fears of some might be, respecting the influence of this example, or however much inclined to listen to the supplications of humbled despotism, or to support the cause of the mortified nobility and clergy, whose cries for vengeance filled every court and every country, yet they were so shackled by circumstances as not to be able to yield them immediate assistance.

Thus have the wars of this century, united with the spread of knowledge, been preparing the way for the accomplishment of God's designs in the overthrow of the tenth part of the antichristian city, and the destruction of the power of those privileged orders of men, who had been its chief supporters, which appears to be the slaying of the seven thousand names of men predicted (Rev. xi. 13,) and which events were to be the prelude to the seventh trumpet, which is to bring those judgments that are to perfect the overthrow of all the antichristian kingdoms and churches, and of all papal corruption and tyranny.

Seeing that God, by his servants the prophets, has condescended in various known and allowed cases, (as may be seen by comparing the writings of the prophets with history,) to reveal his purposes concerning the fate of nations, and that for the confirmation of his word, and the edification of mankind, it certainly becomes us to examine whether there be any tokens or signs by which we may know the present times, lest the judgments of God come upon us when we are not aware, and find us, instead of waiting for him, as his faithful servants, in arms against his providence, and in league for the support of his enemies, and the enemies of his children.

There never were greater or more important events, since the world began, than those to which we are witnesses; events apparently big with the most awful consequences. Though what we have advanced respecting the termination of the power of the Turks in or about the year 1697, and the accomplishment of the seven thunders, by the seven periods of war which have been since that time, may not, by itself, prove that the time is arrived for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and for the commencement of that wo which is to bring antichristian idolatry, corruption, and oppression to an end, yet, in conjunction with other prophecies and events, it is possible that it may form a strong probability—a probability as near to a demonstration as can be expected on such a subject, and the present stage of the business. Compare attentively. In that whole-piece picture, (if I may so call it,) contained in chapter eleventh, we are informed, that after the two witnesses, or two descriptions of witnesses, had laid politically dead in one of the streets of the antichristian city, the mystical Babylon, for three prophetic days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them who saw them. This is a Jewish manner of describing the great political changes of nations from bondage to liberty, as may be seen by comparing this place with Isa. xxv. 6—12; xxvi. 12, 19, 21. Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14. What the prophets in the passages referred to have described as the resurrection of the Jews from the dead, is allowed on all hands, to be their rising to civil and political existence, when they shall be restored from their dispersions and bondage to their own land and to liberty; and the spirit which is promised, (Ezek. xxxvii. 14,) to be put in them that they may live, is not that which is promised (Jer. xxxi. 33, and Ezek. xi. 19,) but the spirit of political and civil life, preparatory to that greater blessing of the renovating spirit of God. Upon the rising of these witnesses from their state of death, they heard a great voice from heaven, (v. 12,) that is, from the Supreme Power, saying unto them, "Come up hither," assume the priviliges and rights of freemen. "And the same hour there was a great earthquake;" (v. 13,) or, in plain language, without prophetic figure, a great national convulsion, from the struggles which the supporters of corruption and tyranny made against the vindicators of the civil and religious rights of mankind. "And the tenth part of the city fell." This for ages past has been supposed to refer to France, the tenth part of the antichristian city, and events seem to verify the conjecture. This doubtless appears to point out one of the ten papal states or monarchies which had been the great supporter of the persecutions and oppressions of the whore of Babylon, and which was to fall some little time before the sounding of the seventh trumpet for the great and desolating wo; and no one of them has been, all through, so conspicuous in her cause as France.

"And in the earthquake"—not at the moment of the falling of the tenth part of the city—but in the earthquake which terminated in that event, "were slain of men seven thousand; or, of the names of men as it should be read. This has also, for near two centuries back, been supposed to be a prediction of the abolition of titles in France, and of the perishing of those privileged orders of men who have been the principal supporters of despotism, and the chief actors in the persecutions which have raged against God's servants, as may be seen more at large in the first part of *the signs of the Times*.

Immediately after the fall of the tenth part of the city, the third wo commences. (v. 14.) "The second wo is past, and behold the third wo cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." That, is, those judgments now commence, which are speedily to effect this happy change; but Babylon the Great is to fall first, and this is to be accomplished by terrible things in righteousness. The nations are to be angry, (v. 18,) and oppose the design of God; the consequence of which will be, he will gather them together, (chap. xvi. 16: xix. 17—21,) and pour upon them his wrath, and thus destroy those (whether secular or ecclesiastical) who destroy the earth.

Let us now return to *the seven thunders*, and see whether our interpretation of them agree with what is here predicted respecting the tenth part of the antichristian city, and the events which have taken place. The last thunder, or period of war, as we have seen, began in 1788, just before the earthquake in France commenced, and continued till 1791, or, if we exclude Russia, and Turkey, 1790. It entered far into the period of the earthquake, and was a means, under providence, of forwarding the consequences of that convulsion. In this part of the earthquake the *names of men* were slain, that is, the titles and distinctions not only of the ecclesiastics, but of the secular nobility were abolished. The titles of these latter were abolished, June 9, 1790, Their cries for vengeance excited the sympathy and pity of the surounding courts, but they were at present in no condition to help them.

The thunder ceased.—August 23, 1791, several potentates and princes entered into a treaty at Pilnitz, and agreed to prepare for the invasion of France, and to unite their forces to restore the ancient despotism, and with the invaded privileges of the nobility and priesthood. The affairs of France advance fast towards a crisis. The angel swears by Him who liveth for ever and ever, that *delay* shall be no longer. August 10, 1792, the monarchy falls. The seventh angel sounds. The nations are angry, and God's wrath is come.

Thus, there hitherto appears to have been the most exact conformity between the representations to John, and the events which we have been considering, especially as to the rising and sinking of the Turkish power, and the periods of war which have afflicted the Latin church, or these western parts of the world, since the termination of the violence of the *second wo*, and preparatory to the *third;* as well as to the revolution in France, and the commotions of nations which have followed the fall of the papacy and monarchy in that country. A correspondence, this which is calculated to excite the most serious alarm on account of our present situation, and of what we have to expect. But it is happy to reflect that this is not all: it is calculated also to cheer the hopes of all those who are waiting for the fulfilment of the promises of God, for the morning cometh as well as the night, and *at evening-time it shall be light*. (Zech. xiv, 7.) But would we escape the evil, and participate only in the good? The likeliest means to insure this, is, without delay, to withdraw from this unhappy and *inauspicious* war, and apply ourselves to a universal reformation.

I shall only observe here, that I apprehend the seventh angel sounded his trumpet. to bring the *third wo*, about autumn 1792, immediately after the fall of the French monarchy; that now the first vial commenced its current of calamities, when not only anarchy raged through all France, but the *nations were angry*, (Rev. xi. 18,) and those military destructions began which have produced such awful effects on the continent. By the *vial on the sea*, I suppose are signified the judgments which were to afflict maritime countries, and bring naval destructions, and which might begin in 1793. By the vial *on the rivers and fountains of waters*, I conclude some district in the territory of the beast is intended, distinguished by the greatness and multitude of its rivers, and sources of rivers. This vial, I suppose, may be dated from *ninety-four*, when the French broke into the north of Italy, and began to conquer and revolutionize the countries watered by the Po, and the other numerous rivers in that quarter.

The *sun*, we have seen, is the sovereign power exercised in that region where the scene of a vision of prophecy is laid, whether exercised by one or many; for but one sun can be admitted in one scene, the decorum of the symbol requiring this. The *fourth vial*, then, is poured on the despotism of the beast's kingdom, Our business is to look for some remarkable stroke on the power, pride, and insolence of the monarchs of Europe, subsequent to the conquests in the country of the rivers and fountains of water, and previous to the fall of the papal government. And this I think is easily to

be distinguished. Behold, since the peace of Campo Formio, not a petty prince, or single monarch, prostrate at the foot of republican France, but *the most august, puissant and invincible emperor of the Romans, king of Hungary, and Bohemia,* with all the sovereigns of Germany and Italy. It is certain that the civil power of the beast's kingdom never experienced so great, and so general a humiliation before.

But, consider attentively the circumstances attending this vial. "And the fourth angel poured his vial on the sun." And what followed? "And power was given unto him to scorch men with great heat." Fire, scorching, and heat, when put with such adjuncts as betoken destruction, are the symbol of calamities, such as war, &c, (Isa. xlii, 25; xlvi. 15, 16. Matt. xiii. 6, 1 Pet. iv. 12.) To whom, or what, was this scorching power given? To the angel, as Dr. Goodwin supposes, or to the sun, as others? We must never forget, in explaining these vials, that, as Mr. Mede observes in his Key, p. 113: "Whatever it is on which a vial is poured out, that suffereth damage and loss from the vial, since the effusion of the vials, is the effusion of the wrath of God, therefore no interpretation can stand here, whereby the effusion of a vial falleth out to the benefit of that upon which it is poured out." It was this consideration, perhaps, which led Dr. Goodwin to his conclusion; but may we not suppose ultimate damage, and even utter extinction, to this sun, to be compatible with a temporary rage, that shall bring great calamities on men? Suppose from the mortifications which the power and pride of despotism suffer, the humbled papal tyrants should be enraged with new fury, and again unite to wage a more furious and cruel war than ever; but that, in spite of all their exertions they should fail, and that their extraordinary rage and efforts should but hasten their ruin; would not this be an exact, and evident illustration of the prophecy? It certainly would.

If we are right in our conjectures, respecting the pouring out of the *sixth vial,* the proof will be, not only that it will be followed by the general excitement to war already noticed, but, that the Ottoman empire be overturned; the Jews restored to their own land, and such a time of trouble (of wars and revolutions,) succeed, as never was since there was a nation. Soon, it is likely, the *seventh angel* will pour out his vial into the air, and a great voice out of the temple in heaven will pronounce, with a sound that will shake all the foundations of the earth. IT IS DONE, (Rev. xvi. 17.) and there will be *voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and a great earthquake* (symbolical,) *such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*

This expectation is confirmed by other prophecies. In the latter part of the eleventh chapter of Daniel, we have a prophecy which foretells the rise, conquests, and fall of the empire of the Turks. After marking out the conquests of this *king of the north* (as this monster is called; the Turks coming originally from this quarter, and their empire lying north of the Saracens, before noticed,) the prophet goes on to predict his fall. (Ver. 44.) "But tidings out of the east, and out of the north shall trouble him; therefore, he shall go forth with great fury to destroy; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." And what are the events which are cotemporary with his fall? (chap. xii. 1.) "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake."

There are to be great shakings of nations, and the Jews, who have long been politically dead, are to be raised to life. Nor let this be thought either impossible or improbable. Read Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14. The probability is, unlikely as such an event may appear at present, that the Jews will, by some means, and some nation, or providence, be set in motion, and take a conspicuous part in those commotions which are to shake to pieces the nations which oppose the providence of God. This is intimated in many prophecies, particularly in that recorded in Zech. xii. which has a special relation to their restoration in the latter days. "In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a heath of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again, in her own place, even Jerusalem."

Were it not for extending these pages beyond due bounds, it would be easy to show, that the aspect of things, as it relates to the Jews, and the present oppressed, discontented and enfeebled state of the Turkish empire, strongly indicate the mercy which awaits the former: and the speedy overthrow of the latter; and serve much to corroborate the expectation excited by prophecy.* Providence operates by second causes. Whether the present extraordinary

* In my (Bicheno's) Restoration of the Jews the Crisis of all Nations, I have examined all the most interesting prophecies relative to the future restoration and destiny of the Jews; and to the second edition, lately published, is prefixed a brief history of that singular people from their first dispersion to the calling of their grand Sanhedrim at Paris, October 6th, 1806, and to which, to avoid enlarging here, either on the prophecies which refer to their restoration, or on the present appearance of things in their favour, I beg leave to refer the reader.

expedition of the French in the east, is immediately connected with the future restoration of the Jews, God only knows; but it is highly probable that it is.

There is a prophecy in Isa. xi. which more than intimates the easy conquest of Egypt, about the time of the gathering of the Jews, in the latter day. Read the whole chapter. It is said at v. 12, "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth." (Verse 14,) "And they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines, towards the west, and shall spoil them of the east together. And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people," &c. We have seen that the smiting of rivers, &c. signifies the conquest of the countries which they water and defend. To pass them dry-shod, intimates the facility of the conquest. This easy conquest has, perhaps, been effected; and if the French should get possession of Syria, nothing is more probable (seeing that they are cut off from all succour and reinforcement from France, *than that they will invite the Jews,* who abound in all the eastern countries a vast deal more than they do here, to join them, and take possession of their own country. Then would Egypt become a highway for the remnant of God's ancient people, and they would fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines (the Turks who inhabit old Philistia and Palestine,) as an eagle darts on his prey, and as a wrestler seizes his antagonist by the shoulder.

We do not pretend to determine how God will effect the fulfilment of his mercy to the seed of Abraham, but let not these sentiments be thought wild. God works by means; and how are the dispersed, disarmed, and disorganized Jews, so likely to be put in motion, armed, and organized, as by being patronised by some powerful nation at war with the Turks. But the vision is for an appointed time. *Wait.*

Now, observe reader, the solemn warning which immediately follows the pouring out of the sixth vial, and the going forth of the unclean spirits to gather together "The kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." "BEHOLD, I COME AS A THIEF. BLESSED IS HE THAT WATCHETH, AND KEEPETH HIS GARMENTS, LEST HE WALK NAKED, AND THEY SEE HIS SHAME." This certainly bespeaks the very near approach of events singularly interesting and awful. That few think of it, and that most ridicule such expectations, only proves that there is more infidelity in the world than is professed, and makes this near approach of the coming of God's judgments the more likely.

I shall solicit the attention of the reader to one more prophecy, which tends to illustrate our subject, and I have done. If we compare, with the vision of the vials, what we find in the latter part of the fourteenth chapter, we shall see, that, under other images, the same calamitous events are represented. In the xi., xii., xiii., and xiv., chapters, we have a distinct set of visions which more immediately relate to the affairs of the church. The former part of the fourteenth chapter discloses the scene of reformation. In the latter part, from verse 14, we have represented in two visions, one of the harvest, and the other of the vintage, those judgments of God on the enemies of his church, which are to terminate in their utter destruction. The prophet Joel, (chap. iii.,) had predicted the same series of calamities, under the same images: but without the division here observed. The reason of this double representation, first under the image of a harvest, and then under that of the vintage, which quickly follows harvest, I suppose to be for the purpose of marking out that comparative pause, or cessation from general hostilities, which was to take place in this decisive conflict with the enemies of the church of Christ. Some such pause is discoverable in the pouring out of the seven vials. For what follows on the pouring out of the sixth, on the river Euphrates, viz. "the going forth of the unclean spirits to the kings of the earth, and of the whole (papal antichristian) world, to gather them together to battle," and the warning which is given, "Behold, I come as a thief," &c., supposes a new and more general combination, or, at least, gathering together to battle, than what before existed; a renewal of hostilities: and a distinguished scene of calamitous warfare, which will prove more fatal than any thing before. And seeing that all are pretty well agreed, that the vintage is the representation of that great crush of the enemies of God's church, which is to take place in the latter day, just previous to the coming of Christ; and as no doubt can be made that the wars and revolutions signified by the judgments of the sixth and seventh vials, are those which are to accomplish the same end; I, therefore, suppose that the visions of the harvest and vintage, and those of the vials, fit as so many tallies; the judgments of the harvest answering to those of the former vials; and the final conflict and crush, signified by the vintage, answering to the general overthrow under the latter vials, after the pause intimated in the episode which is introduced at the commencement of the sixth.

But there is one peculiarity in the treading of the winepress which ought not to be passed unnoticed. It is said, "the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it

into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and the blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses' bridle, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. This vine of the earth which is gathered, and cast into the winepress, is another symbol of the antichristian party, gathered together to the battle of Armageddon. Time must illustrate what is meant by the treading the winepress without the city. But this city, must be the same with what is elsewhere, in this book, denominated the great city, and Babylon the Great; and it is probable that the great crush of God's enemies will be without the bounds of the beast's territory. There are many conjectures on this head; the most probable, perhaps, is, that it will be in Palestine; the length of the holy land answering to a thousand six hundred furlongs, or two hundred miles, in the text. Mr. Mede's objections to this conjecture, have certainly, at this time, no weight. Things rather looking that way than otherwise. But these conjectures we leave. Events will at once illustrate the prophecy and confirm the truth of divine revelation. Let us watch.

And does the aspect of things indicate an awful crisis to be at hand? and are there any grounds for apprehending that we live the very moment when Jesus Christ utters this warning: "Behold, I come as a thief!" At the moment, when the angel of vengeance, who hath power over fire, cometh forth from the altar, where the saints have been slain, and "crieth with a loud cry to him that have the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sickle, and gather the cluster of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe!" How awful the thought!

A SYNOPTICAL TABLE OF PROPHETIC NUMBERS.

(FROM BICHENO'S "SIGNS OF THE TIMES.")

The 2300 years, Dan. viii. 14, which comprehend the length of the vision from a distinguished pushing of the Persians for conquest, to the cleansing of the sanctuary, begin in the year - - - - -	B. C. 481	when Xerxes set out to invade Greece, with five millions of followers, and whose wars were prefigured, Dan. viii. 4, 20, by the pushing of a ram, and end in the year - - - - - - - -				A. D. 1819	
The 1260 years, Dan. viii. 25; xii. 7. Rev. xi. 2, 3; xii. 6, 14; xiii. 5, the period of the prosperity of the papal beast, till the commencement of the decisive attack on his usurpation, begin in the year - - - - - -	A. D. 529	When the code of Justinian (the stronghold of clerical tyranny) was first published, and about which time this same emperor declared the bishop of Rome the judge of all, but himself to be judged by no one, and enforced uniformity of religious opinion, under pain of the most inhuman penalties; and when also the order of Benedictine monks, the great support of the papacy, was founded; and end in the year	A. D. 1789	when his prosperity terminates			When the transgression of desolation shall end, (Dan. viii. 13,) and the abomination which hath made desolate the C'h of Christ and the nations of the earth shall be brought to a period. (Dan. xii. 11.)
The 1290 years, Dan. xii. 11, which comprehend, beside the 1260 years, 30 years more for the conflict with Antichrist, begin in the same year - - - - - -	529	- - - - - - - -		and end in the year		1819	
The 1335 years, Dan. xii. 12, which are to bring to a still more blessed period, begin in the same year - -	529	- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -		and end in the year			A. D. 1864
Besides the general slaughter of the witnesses in the other papistical kingdoms about the same time, (Rev. xi. 7,) those in France were slain by Louis XIV, when he repealed the edict of Nantes, and tormented, plundered, banished and murdered near 2,000,000 of his Protestant subjects, in the year	A. D. 1685	But who, after being politically dead three lunar days and a half, or about 105 years, began to revive in the year - -			A. D. 1789	When the French Constituent Assembly declared civil and religious liberty to be the right of all.	

Thus the decisive attack upon the errors, usurpations, and tyrannies of the papal beast, commences in the year - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - A. D. 1789

To destroy the papacy, the Turkish power, and other antichristian despotisms, at least so far as to make way for the restitution of the Jews, and to prepare mankind for greater blessings than have ever yet been known upon earth, will take *thirty* years, the period for executing the judgments predicted in Isa. xxvi. 20, 21; xxvii. 1. Joel iii. 9—15. Zeph. iii. 8, as also for the gathering of the vintage and pouring out of the vials, which are to be the means of cleansing the sanctuary, - 30

To accomplish some other of the wonderful purposes of God, probably to gather and try the Jews preparatory to their conversion, to destroy the remains of tyranny, (particularly of the dragonic,) and to purify and enlarge the Gentile church, will occupy *forty-five* years more; at the end of which, it is likely, there will be that glorious appearance of the Lord in favour of his servants, promised in Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix., and Zech. xii. 8—14; xiv., and it is probable, in Rev. xx. 9. Now the Jewish nation is born at once, (Isa. lxvi. 8,) and the distant heathens are to be converted to Christianity. (Isa. lii. 10—15. Jer. xvi. 19. Ezek. xxxix. 21.) This is the time of which Daniel says, *Blessed is he cometh to it*, and which is (if the premises be good,) about the year - - 45 1864

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